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Damaraland
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Swakopmund
Walvis Bay
Swakop
AFRICA
BECHUANALAN
PROTECTORATE
Kalahari
Desert
Mandate to the
Union of S. Africa
Lüderitz
Molopo
Mafeking
Bechuanaland
Upington
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Kimberley
Port Nolloth
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Britstown
Matjesfontein
Colesberg
Middelburg
CAPE OF GOOD
Olifants R.
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THE MILNER PAPERS
(SOUTH AFRICA)
1899–1905

HISTORY OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR, PAINTED BY A NATIVE OF THE BEDFORD DISTRICT, CAPE COLONY.

THE MILNER PAPERS

SOUTH AFRICA
1899–1905

EDITED BY
CECIL HEADLAM

VOL. II

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PREFACE

THE voluminous papers relating to his long career, preserved by Lord Milner, contain a mass of information invaluable to the future historian, and not without significance in modern politics. The present volume, which concludes the South African series, covers a period of intensive development unsurpassed in the history of any country. It shows the High Commissioner at grips with the problems arising out of the Boer War, the negotiations for Peace, and the reconstruction and development of a new South Africa after the War. Many long and important despatches by him on these subjects have already been published in Blue Books of the time. It would have needed another volume to print them in full here. Yet only so, perhaps, could the full magnitude of Lord Milner's labours for South Africa be adequately displayed. But since they are thus available for historians, it has seemed best to use the published despatches mainly as material for an historical narrative, with full references to the Blue Books and the Milner Papers upon which it is based. There remains a multitude of documents of the first importance both from the point of view of present-day problems and historical controversies. There are, for instance, Lord Milner's views upon native policy; upon the new Imperialism, of which he was a pioneer; upon the suspension of the Cape Constitution; and upon the weaknesses of the party system. The political circumstances attending the importation of Chinese labour, and Lord Milner's criticisms of the military campaigns, and his suggestions as to how they might have been conducted, are here clearly revealed for the first time. The same is true of his differences with Lord Kitchener, differences not of persons but of policy, over the negotiations and terms of Peace.

Finally we see him turning, with the speed and energy of a racer who has been held up at the starting-post, to the stupendous task of building up a new civilization, based upon clean administration and economic and agricultural development in the new Colonies. That tremendous work, so tensely wrought, and planned with such

breadth of vision and foresight, takes place before the reader's eyes. The verdict of history no doubt will be that it places Milner among the greatest of the builders of the British Empire along the lines of self-government and internal development of the parts. For it will be observed with interest how Milner and the authorities at the Colonial Office, almost from the moment that the Boers declared war, began to work for the future of their country and its self-government within the Empire.

The Editor expresses his dutiful thanks to His Majesty the King for permission to print letters and messages to and from Queen Victoria and King Edward.

He further gratefully records his obligation to H.H. Princess Helena Victoria for permission to quote from letters from H.R.H. Princess Christian ; and to the Rt. Hon. J. H. Thomas, Secretary of State for H.M. Dominions, for leave to print certain despatches. Thanks are also rendered to the Rt. Hon. Stanley Baldwin, for leave to quote a passage from his book " On England " ; to Mr. Rudyard Kipling for permission to quote from his poem " The Pro-Consuls," and a private letter ; and to the following for permission to print private correspondence : Lieut.-General Lord Baden-Powell, G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O. ; Sir Henry Birchenough, Bart., K.C.M.G. ; Mrs. Carruthers, C.H. (Miss Violet Markham) ; Brig.-General the Hon. Sir Charles Crewe, K.C.M.G ; the Rt. Hon. Viscount Grey of Fallodon, K.G. ; the Right Rev. Bishop Hamilton Baynes, D.D. ; Sir J. A. Marriott ; the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Midleton, K.P. ; the Rt. Hon. Sir Henry Norman, Bart. ; Mr. James Rendel ; the Rt. Hon. Sir James Rose Innes ; the Rt. Hon. Earl of Selborne ; the Rt. Hon. General J. C. Smuts ; Miss B. M. Synge ; Major-General Sir Fabian Ware, K.C.V.O., K.B.E., C.B., C.M.G. ; and to the Trustees and Executors of the following : the Earl of Balfour, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, General Louis Botha, General Sir Redvers Buller, the Earl of Camperdown, the Earl of Cromer, Marquis Curzon of Kedleston, Sir Clinton Dawkins, Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, Mr. Edmund Garrett, Mr. Philip Lyttelton Gell, Viscount Goschen, Earl Grey, Lord Haldane, Sir Edward Hamilton, Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, Sir Starr Jameson, Lord Kilbracken of Killegar, Lord Kitchener of Khartoum, Lord Loch, the Hon. Alfred Lyttelton, Mrs. Montefiore, Sir Frederick Milner, the Earl of Minto, Mr. Cecil Rhodes, Colonel Frank Rhodes, Earl Roberts of Kandahar, Sir Herbert Warren, Lord Wenlock, Lord French of Ypres.

PREFACE

The Editor is indebted for help on various points kindly given by Sir H. F. Wilson, K.C.M.G., K.B.E. ; General Sir Ian Hamilton, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., D.S.O. ; Major-General Sir John Hanbury Williams, G.C.V.O., K.C.B., C.M.G. ; the Rt. Hon. J. S. Sandars, P.C. ; the Hon. Mrs. Lyttelton Gell ; Colonel Sir Rhys H. Price, K.B.E., C.M.G. ; Mr. Geoffrey Dawson ; Mr. George Churton Collins ; Mr. George Goch ; Captain C. C. Viner.

Acknowledgments are due to Mr. William Nicholson for permission to reproduce his portrait of Lord Kitchener ; and to the Proprietors of *Punch* for permission to reproduce the cartoon, " The Stain of Censure."

The footnotes are by the Editor.

References to documents among the Milner manuscripts are given thus : *Milner Papers*, XX, i, 1.

CORRIGENDA IN VOL. I

(i) In footnote, page 46, *for* Brockenhagen, *read* Borckenhagen, the chief exponent of the aims of the Bond, and *delete* " a Hollander " after the name of Mr. Reitz, who was born in Cape Colony.

(ii) On page 301 *for* Sir Spencer Wilkinson, *read* Mr. Spenser Wilkinson.

(iii) On page 189, line 11, and on page 289, note ii, the letters and despatches attributed to Mr. Conyngham Greene were written by Mr. Edmund Fraser, who acted as British Agent in the Transvaal during the former's absence from June 1898 to March 1899. The Editor regrets these errors, and that by confusions in the Index in certain copies Mr. Edmund Fraser was identified with Sir J. G. Fraser, and General J. C. Smuts with Mr. J. Smuts, the British Consul in Swaziland.

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Not by lust of praise or show,
Not by Peace herself betrayed—
Peace herself must they forego
Till that peace be fitly made ;
And in single strength uphold
Wearier hands and hearts acold.

On the stage their act hath framed
For thy sports, O Liberty !
Doubted are they, and defamed
By the tongues their act set free,
While they quicken, tend and raise
Power that must their power displace.

—*The Pro-Consuls*, by RUDYARD KIPLING.

CHAPTER I

The Appeal to Arms: First Phase—Boer Invasions and British Reverses

I should prefer to be remembered for the tremendous effort, . . . made after the war, not only to repair its ravages, but also to restart the New Colonies on a far higher plane of civilization than they had ever previously attained. . . .

The Dutch can never own a perfect allegiance merely to Great Britain. The British can never, without moral injury, accept allegiance to any body politic which excludes their motherland. But British and Dutch alike could, without loss of integrity, without any sacrifice of their several traditions, unite in loyal devotion to an Empire-State, in which Great Britain and South Africa would be partners, and could work cordially together for the good of South Africa as a member of that greater whole. And so you see the true Imperialist is also the best South African.

(*Viscount Milner.* Speech at Johannesburg, March 31, 1905.)

Rarely has a British statesman borne so heavy a burden of work, responsibility and anxiety as Sir Alfred Milner bore through these early months of the war. His strength of will, courage and confidence alone carried him successfully through an ordeal which would have broken a weaker man.

L. S. Amery, "*The Times* History of the War in South Africa."

ON the day after the time fixed by their ultimatum had expired, the Boers, under Commandant-General Piet Joubert, moved forward to invade Natal (Oct. 12, 1899). The war which was to ensue was a duel of races; a struggle between two national ambitions for the power to develop South Africa according to different ideals. It was the product of a clash between two opposite types of civilization, the one modern and progressive, and rooted in the principles of representative self-government and protection of the natives; the other backward and repressive, rooted in the principle of a despotic minority rule. The direct question to be fought out was, whether the military hegemony of the South African Republic and its ally, the Orange Free State, involving the predominance of Dutch Afrikander Nationalism, was to prevail; or whether Great Britain was to retain her position

as the Paramount Power. The fundamental point on which the issue was joined was, whether British subjects throughout the Empire were entitled to equality of treatment and the right of self-government.

Chamberlain had long ago warned his countrymen that such a war, if it came, would prove "a long war, a bitter war, and a costly war." Sir Alfred Milner knew, and had warned the Government, that the Empire would be called upon to meet the greatest strain which had been put upon it since the Mutiny (Vol. I, p. 559). He had foreseen the probable end of the negotiations, and had done his utmost to ensure that Great Britain should not be caught napping, and that timely despatch of reinforcements should demonstrate her determination to the Boers, and reassure the loyalists in the British Colonies. We know what happened. When the Boers declared war in October, the reinforcement of three batteries, promised in June, had not arrived. The long-desired Army Corps was not mobilized in England until October 7, and the whole of the 47,000 men of which it was composed did not reach South Africa until after the beginning of December. So anxious had the British Cabinet been to avoid the appearance of bullying the little Republic; so difficult had some Ministers and many people in England and Africa found it to believe that the Boers would once again resort to arms. Only the arrival of reinforcements from India in the nick of time, and unforeseen delays in the mobilization of the Boers, saved Natal from being overrun and annexed by the Republics.

The situation, in fact, was misconceived on both sides. Whilst in England a brief and successful campaign was confidently expected, the majority of the Boers were quite ignorant of the military power of Great Britain, if she chose to exert it. Nor did they expect her to exert such power as she had. As the papers published in Volume I have plainly shown, Sir Alfred had been convinced that the Dutch Republics would not take up arms, if the diplomatic pressure of the Imperial Power were backed by a timely and sufficient show of force. Its absence confirmed the belief held by one party among the Boers that Great Britain would never fight. They were convinced that, whilst willing to champion the cause of the Uitlanders by peaceful means, the Imperial Power would shrink from the cost and danger of war, and that, in the last resort, the influence of Queen Victoria's dislike of war would prevent it.

At the Bloemfontein Conference the war party, led by Fischer in the Orange Free State, and by the State Secretary and State Attorney in the Transvaal, had won the day against that led by General Joubert.[1]

But now that their challenge had been accepted, the Republics and their sympathizers were quite confident of victory. Nor was their confidence the mere ecstasy of ignorance. Once before, in 1881, they had gained an initial success in a minor engagement, and that success had been promptly followed by the apparent collapse of the Imperial Power. Now they were far better equipped for repeating the victory of Majuba Hill.

In numbers, armaments, and geographical position, they enjoyed an immediate advantage. Strategically, they held the inner lines, whilst beyond their borders they could count upon the aid, whether veiled or open, of large numbers of Dutch Afrikanders dwelling within the British Colonies. Politically, they had prolonged experience of the vacillations of British policy; of demands followed by withdrawals, of threats ending in attempts at reconciliation. They were aware of a party in England, which, whether for reasons of political advantage, personal vendettas, distrust of Rhodes and his schemes, jealousy of capitalist adventures, or from a generous instinct to champion the weaker side, was ready to give them support. The traditions of Charles James Fox praying for the success of the French and Americans over his own country, and of Mr. Gladstone espousing the cause of little nations "rightly struggling to be free," were enlisted on their side. Moreover, the Boers were buoyed up by their conviction that in the Germans also, in the Hollanders, and, possibly, the French and Russians, they would find support against any attempt to destroy the independence of the Boer Republic.

As to numbers, when their ultimatum expired, the Boers had at their command some 90,000 men, with 110 guns, superior in most respects to the British. But though little more than half of their man-power was available in the field at any one time, knowledge of the country and skill in using it, inherent in farmers accustomed to live in the saddle, combined with trained marksmanship, rendered each one of these splendid fighting men, on their own

[1] This is borne out by a letter from General Joubert, published after the outbreak of the war by Dr. Farrelly, who was behind the scenes both in Bloemfontein and Pretoria before and during the Bloemfontein Conference. *v.* "The Settlement after the War," Ch. XX.

terrain, the equivalent of two or three soldiers in a regular army tied to transport and traditional formations. Had it not been that they lacked good generalship and initiative in taking the offensive, the mobility, the courage, the determination and resource displayed by these irregular mounted troops must have succeeded in delivering a knock-out blow upon the inadequate forces at first opposed to them.

For in October, 1899, there were not more than 27,000 British troops south of the Limpopo, and these were scattered over a vast area.

Of these, not more than 11,000 men were stationed in the Cape Colony. Half of this number consisted of local forces—the Cape Mounted Police, the Cape Mounted Rifles and volunteers. Small detachments were echeloned along nearly a thousand miles of railway line to Mafeking, where Colonel (Lieut.-General Lord) Baden-Powell presently collected a garrison of 1,000 men, whilst Kimberley was held by local forces, and the half-regiment which Sir Alfred had insisted upon sending there at the end of September. Others were stationed in the De Aar–Orange River district, with posts at Stormberg and Naauwpoort to guard the Port Elizabeth and East London lines. But thanks to the neutral attitude adopted by the Cape Ministry, there were no troops available to defend the bridges over the Orange at Norval's Pont or Bethulie Bridge. The remainder of the British force, amounting to 16,000 men, was stationed in Natal. This number included some 3,000 mounted police and volunteers ; amongst them the Imperial Light Horse, a regiment which was soon to give the lie to those who maligned the Uitlanders as cowards and shirkers.

The officer in command in Natal, before the arrival of Sir George White on October 7, was Major-General Sir W. Penn Symons. In order to prevent the invasion of the Colony and to secure the coal mines of Dundee, he had complied with the wishes of the Natal Government and moved up part of his small army from Ladysmith to Glencoe and Dundee.[1] White consented to continue this disposition of his forces. But for the moral effect of such retirement both upon Dutch Afrikanders in the Cape Colony and upon the natives, he would have preferred to concentrate for defence about the central point of Ladysmith, the junction of the two railway lines from the Transvaal and Orange Free State ; or even to abandon both Dundee and Ladysmith and to hold the line of the Tugela. For

[1] Cd. 44, p. 25.

whilst the Boer plan of campaign contemplated the investment of Kimberley and Mafeking, and the invasion of the Cape Colony, in order to rouse their sympathizers there to rebellion, their first main effort, it was always evident, would be directed against Natal. A concentric attack was begun upon the projecting frontier of northern Natal by 14,000 Transvaalers advancing from east and north, and 10,000 Free Staters from the west. The Dundee detachment repulsed the Boer column from the east at Talana Hill, where Penn Symons was killed. But General Yule, succeeding to the command, soon realized that he must fall back upon Ladysmith. He conducted a successful retreat, reaching Ladysmith after a critical night march, thanks to the diversion created by White's successful actions at Elandslaagte and Rietfontein and to the skilful guidance of Colonel Dartnell, head of the Natal Police (Oct. 20–26). White endeavoured to deliver a smashing blow at the forces which now encircled him. But he failed to force a victory at Lombard's Kop, whilst a detachment which had been sent out to surprise the Boer's right centre met with disaster at Nicholson's Nek (Oct. 30). Two famous Boer Generals had come to the front in these battles, Christian De Wet and Louis Botha. Practically the whole of the Natal Field Army, cavalry included, was shut up in Ladysmith.

The position in Natal was thus intensely critical. For two anxious weeks, before British reinforcements reached Natal, the Garden Colony lay practically at the mercy of the Boer armies. Joubert could easily have rushed Pietermaritzburg. Preparations were made for abandoning it and falling back upon Durban. The High Commissioner informed the Governor [1] that *Terrible* and *Magicienne* would reinforce *Tartar* and *Powerful* in the endeavour to hold that port (Oct. 29, Milner Papers, X, ii, 56–9; X, iii, 86; XV, iii, 314). Hely-Hutchinson, whilst refusing to contemplate disaster, represented the situation as critical, but even in this grave crisis the Government was determined not to arm Usibebu's Zulus against the Boers. Sir Walter concluded his reply to Sir Alfred's inquiry whether Maritzburg could be held, by saying that he would "not ask for a soldier to be sent here, not knowing what your needs may be in the Cape. If I were Buller, I would come here and take command, getting up to Ladysmith if possible." The Boers, however, with two-thirds of their army engaged in investing Ladysmith, refrained from advancing in force into Natal, and in the meantime the position was improved and confidence restored by

[1] Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, Governor of Natal.

the arrival of troops (Oct. 31, Nov. 11, Milner Papers, XV, iii, 266, 283).

Meanwhile, the news of White's reverse at Lombard's Kop stimulated the Free State commandos, which had been hovering on the border, to invade the Cape Colony. They crossed the Orange River by the undefended bridges at Norval's Pont and Bethulie, the route by which it had been planned that the army corps should advance into the Orange Free State. Between the 20th and 30th of October their Dutch sympathizers contemplated a rising, but abandoned the idea. But in November, as the difficulties of the British became more apparent, and Boer commandos appeared in Herschel and Barkly East, unrest grew apace in the northern districts of the Colony.

Extract from Despatch. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

16/1/00. . . . Within a space of less than three weeks from the occupation of Colesberg, no less than five great districts—those of Colesberg, Albert, Aliwal North, Barkly East, and Wodehouse—had gone over without hesitation, and, so to speak, bodily, to the enemy. Throughout that region the Landdrosts of the Orange Free State had established their authority, and everywhere, in the expressive words of a magistrate, British loyalists were "being hunted out of town after town like sheep." . . . (Cd. 264.)

In Rhodesia, whilst the natives remained loyal and peaceful the Boer guns compelled withdrawal from Crocodile Pools and Gaberones to Magalapye, which was held in strength sufficient to repel any attack. This retirement eliminated all possibility of communicating with Mafeking. There were 43 police stations in Southern Rhodesia with some ten men apiece, for keeping order among the natives; 100 police at Salisbury, 70 police and 300 volunteers and recruits at Bulawayo were the only reserves. Colonel Plumer [1] with a small force was at Tuli, in touch with the Boer outposts on the river. In these circumstances it was obvious that the long stretch of railways along the Transvaal border could hardly be protected, nor could any more fighting men be spared from Rhodesia.

Extract from Letter. Sir Arthur Lawley [2] *(Lord Wenlock) to Sir A. Milner*

30/10/99. . . . I feel quite confident of the security of Rhodesia. . . . We have now over 300 men at Palapye and

[1] Field-Marshal Lord Plumer. [2] Administrator of Matabeleland.

Magalapye, mostly volunteers, the remainder police—all equipped, rationed and paid for by the B.S.A. Co. . . . Our forces are so small and our frontier so extended that we cannot hope to make any great demonstration. . . . Our natives appear very peaceful. . . .

By the second week in November Baden-Powell reported that the enemy were closing in upon Mafeking and destroying the railway, which had hitherto been kept open by an armoured train (Milner Papers, X, 13, 30).

The importance of Mafeking, on the border of the Transvaal and Bechuanaland, is indicated by the following interesting report of the enemy's plan for an advance through the Bechuanaland Protectorate, from a Boer source :

Extract from Letter. Sir Arthur Lawley to Sir A. Milner.

11/11/99. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . The Boers counted on Linchwe's help and Khama's neutrality as a foregone conclusion. They were confident of Mafeking falling an easy prey. The scheme was for Cronje to take Mafeking and immediately to march northwards. The Boer Commando from Sekwani to march through Linchwe's country and join Cronje at Mochadi ; Grobelaar from Selika's to advance through Khama's country on Palapye ; and the force from Tuli to join hands with the others at Buluwayo. No forward movement was to be made until they had first taken Mafeking. . . . The attempt will still be made, if they can take Mafeking. . . . We know that they tried hard to win over Linchwe and Khama—and we know that they have kept commandos at the points mentioned along the Crocodile, apparently waiting for some incentive to move. It is therefore possible that they may attempt a strong forward movement from the south. Mafeking will, I believe, hold its own. Plumer should be able to keep the Tuli commando in check. There is then the Protectorate. . . .

Linchwe had been anxious to attack a commando which was reported to be a few hundred yards within the Transvaal border. But although he promised to respect Boer private property, the Resident Commissioner, Sir Marshall Clarke, warned him that natives must not fight beyond their own reserves, unless first attacked (22/11/99, Milner Papers, XV, iii, 296).

Linchwe's men, however, got out of hand, and contrary to strict orders, crossed the river and attacked the Boers, who, they represented, had been harassing them at Sekwani and preventing them from tilling their lands. In reporting this " regrettable

incident" to the High Commissioner, Sir A. Lawley added (14/12/99), "the action of the natives on this occasion shows how impossible it is to control them, and you may rely on it that in future we will run no risk whatever of any repetition of such an occurrence." . . .

Such was the state of affairs when Major-General Sir Redvers Buller arrived at Cape Town on October 31. Buller, who had accepted Sir William Butler's view as to the needlessness of reinforcements in July, and was much under his influence (Milner Papers, XV, ii, 243), brought with him to Cape Town a spirit of depression, which increased upon his arrival. Although he had formerly fought in South Africa, and was now past his prime, he had never held any independent command in the field. His inability to handle large bodies of troops had been alarmingly displayed at manœuvres in 1898. Yet the force with which he was now entrusted was twice as large as any Marlborough ever commanded in Flanders, or Wellington in the Peninsula or at Waterloo. The weight of responsibility and the magnitude of his task appear to have overwhelmed him. The spirit in which he had accepted the command had been ominous. He seems to have been aware that he was not fit for it, and expressed the intention of returning home as soon as he could. Within a few weeks, the pessimism of his communications to Lord Lansdowne produced so disconcerting an impression of defeatism (Nov. 25), that Lord Roberts felt it his duty to place his services at the disposal of the Government, although he was acutely aware of the opposition his appointment would meet with from the Wolseley clique at the War Office.[1] Just at that time, however, it was hoped that Buller would achieve a brilliant success upon the Tugela. What happened was the deplorable defeat at Colenso, a defeat invited by a series of the crudest tactical errors.

The Situation at Cape Town.[2]

Cape Town, during the years immediately succeeding the outbreak of the war, was perhaps the most interesting place in the world. It was the stage on which many of the more spectacular incidents of the war began and ended. It witnessed the arrival of the

[1] Lord Roberts to Lord Lansdowne, Dec. 8, 1889. Quoted by Lord Newton, "Life of Lord Lansdowne," pp. 161, 162. Cf. General Sir Neville Lyttelton, "Eighty Years," pp. 201, 243.

[2] In the following paragraphs the Editor is much indebted to notes kindly supplied by Sir Harry Wilson, K.C.M.G., K.B.E.

anxiously awaited transports, and the comings and goings of all the Generals, Buller, Roberts, Kitchener, French, Baden-Powell, Plumer, Lyttelton, Ian Hamilton, and many other distinguished soldiers whose names are indissolubly connected with the war. The docks presented an amazing spectacle. Crammed with khaki-clad soldiers embarking and disembarking—flaring with electric lights—piled with Monte Rosas of groceries and Matterhorns of hay—they revealed how great was the task of despatching and provisioning a huge expeditionary force. At the Mount Nelson Hotel there was a constant stream of officers on their way up country, or bringing despatches from the front. The large dining-hall was always crowded with guests. Notable visitors followed one another in rapid succession—Mr. Winston Churchill after his escape from the Pretoria gaol; Sir George White and other distinguished survivors of Ladysmith; literary personalities such as Rudyard Kipling and Conan Doyle, to say nothing of a bevy of charming ladies who had followed their men-folk to South Africa, and newspaper correspondents galore of various nationalities. It was a veritable "whispering gallery" of rumours, both false and true, where "regrettable incidents" were sometimes unduly magnified.

A social centre of a different kind was Groote Schuur at Rondebosch, the residence of Cecil Rhodes, which was occupied during the first year of the war by Lady Edward Cecil and Lady Charles Bentinck. During the first eight months of this year their respective husbands were in Mafeking, and for five months Rhodes was shut up in Kimberley. Whether he was in residence or away, Rhodes kept open house for his friends, who came and went as suited them. When the Cape Parliament was in session, certain members lived at Groote Schuur. In 1900 there were Mr. Laing, Dr. (Sir Thomas) Smartt, Mr. (Sir Edgar) Walton and Mr. (Chief Justice) Graham, who were joined, when the siege of Ladysmith was raised, by Doctor Jameson. The latter was feeling the effects of the privations and typhoid fever, from which he had suffered during the siege. At this time, too, the Groote Schuur party was reinforced by the Duchess of Teck, and a group of officers convalescent and resting. Among them were Lord Edward Cecil, Lord Charles Bentinck, Colonel Frank Rhodes, Captain the Hon. (General Sir) W. Lambton and Captain (Col.) M. Earle. The main activities of Groote Schuur did not lie in military, but in civilian and political directions. Mr. Rhodes's two hostesses worked hard at housing and feeding the Rand Refugees,

at business connected with the Guild of Loyal Women, and at entertaining Rhodes's political supporters. The work at Groote Schuur was above all South African ; any English guests there were impressed into the service of local affairs. The work was intense. There was not much time or inclination for purely social engagements, though Rhodes's Cape ponies were ridden by those who cared for this form of exercise. Rhodes himself, when he returned after the siege of Kimberley, rode (very slowly !) every morning before breakfast. The hospitality of Groote Schuur was not only for Rhodes's personal friends. This lovely place was open to the public all day and every day, so that on Sunday afternoons residents were often blockaded in their rooms, or driven right away by the crowds that thronged the garden and even walked into the house. One Sunday afternoon, after lunch, while watching the crowds that seemed to fill every nook and corner of the gardens, and to have possessed themselves of every seat on the stoep, Rhodes turned to one of his guests and said very simply, " Some people like to have cows in their parks. I like to have people." A saying that was most characteristic, for Cecil Rhodes shared everything he had with his fellow-creatures.

But the chief centre of political and social activity was, of course, Government House. A long, unpretentious, old-fashioned mansion, it stands at the side of an avenue running through " the Gardens," which form a park-like space between the business and residential regions of the city, intersected by footpaths, and pleasantly shaded by trees of moderate growth. It comprises, in fact, the remains of " the old Government House in the Gardens " of Lady Anne Barnard's " Letters," where Lord Macartney took up his residence after the first British occupation in 1797, and " hopped up its perpendicular staircase, gout and all, like a parrot to his perch." Haphazard and formless additions have spoilt the character of the original building, but its chief rooms are lofty and well-proportioned, and the ballroom recalls similar old-fashioned saloons in English provincial towns. Sir Alfred's offices, as Governor and High Commissioner, were in the building, but during the war the ordinary accommodation for Clerks and Secretaries was supplemented by commandeering the ballroom and its appurtenances. The pleasure grounds stretching toward the Houses of Parliament are attractive and restful, with their green lawns and straggling flower-beds. Here and there a tall palm rears itself to break the line of the more familiar foliage, and makes a charming foreground

for the towering precipices of Table Mountain, and the Lion which dominates the whole landscape.[1]

Sir Alfred's *entourage* consisted of Major (Major-General Sir John) Hanbury Williams, most capable and unruffled of Military Secretaries, and Mrs. Hanbury Williams, who did the honours of a difficult position with conspicuous success; Lord Algernon Gordon-Lennox, urbane and discreet, as Hanbury Williams's assistant; "Ozzy" Walrond, the Private Secretary, always cheery and alert, with a singular flair for discovering intrigues and an almost uncanny knowledge of the intricacies of Government codes; and three A.D.C.s: Captain Chester Master, cool and efficient, as he showed himself later at the "Waterworks" fiasco near Bloemfontein; Captain Davenport, quiet and unassuming; and the Duke of Westminster, known as "Bend'or," invincibly boyish and gay. To these was added (for a time) Captain Frank Wedgwood of the North Staffordshire Militia, who, with his cousin Major Cecil Wedgwood of the same regiment, had left the ancestral business at Etruria to look after itself, while they joined in the war. Other members of the Staff were (Sir) George Fiddes, the Imperial Secretary, an incomparable draughtsman, deeply versed in the lore of Transvaal intransigeance; J. F. Perry, a brilliant young Oxonian, who came out from the Colonial Office to take up the work of the Secretariat; Lord Basil Blackwood, Deputy Judge Advocate, an irresistible companion, then and afterwards, whose powers of caricature as "B.T.B." have an abiding celebrity; Mr. Albert Browne, Chief Clerk to the High Commissioner, whose acquaintance with South African politics and finance afterwards found scope when he became Treasurer of the Orange River Colony; and H. F. (Sir Harry) Wilson, formerly Secretary to Mr. Chamberlain, and afterwards Colonial Secretary and Acting Lieutenant-Governor of the Orange River Colony, whose duties were of a legal character.[2] Nor should "John Charles" Vaughan, Sir Conyngham Greene's assistant in the Transvaal before the war broke out, and James (Lord) Stopford, both general favourites, be forgotten in this enumeration. No lis would be quite complete without a reference to Fauconnier, the admirable chef, Madame Fauconnier, who acted as housekeeper, and Brockwell, Sir Alfred's excellent butler and valet.

The work at Government House was heavy and continuous for all concerned. For Sir Alfred himself it was of the most exacting description. He often laboured on into the small hours of the

[1] See illustration, Vol. I, p. 96.

[2] See Ch. III, p. 108.

morning. He had frequent talks with the G.O.C., General Forestier-Walker. On occasion they might be seen, with large scale maps before them, poring over the movements of the rebel commandos in the Colony, or other deep matters of military interest. There were receptions in the Garden of the Guild of Loyal Women and kindred patriotic bodies ; large luncheons and dinner parties for local and travelling celebrities ; troops had to be inspected, deputations received, and despatches read aloud to expectant and enthusiastic crowds.

Sir Alfred enjoyed a day's hunting, now and again, with Captain Chester Master's pack on the Cape Flats, where the elusive jackal did duty for the British fox, but he could not often find time for the sport. Occasionally he would take part in a game of bowls or lawn-tennis on the lawns at Government House, the rendezvous at evening of many a pleasant gathering which the host seldom had time to attend. An indefatigable performer on the lawn-tennis court was the late Earl Brassey, who appeared in Table Bay early in 1900, sailing home from his Government at Melbourne in the *Sunbeam* with Lord Graham as his navigating officer, and his daughter Lady Mabelle Egerton, who entertained his many guests on board the famous old yacht.[1]

Ever since the delivery of the Boer ultimatum the situation at Cape Town had been extraordinarily tense. Whilst the arrival of the transports was awaited with impatience that was almost an agony, the Naval Squadron under Rear-Admiral Harris helped largely to safeguard the position. Apart from guarding the ports of Simon's Bay, Durban, and East London, and patrolling the seas to protect transports and prevent the landing of ammunition destined for the enemy, whether in the Colony or at Lourenço Marques, Admiral Harris held 600 men with Q.F. guns in readiness to be landed on the Cape Flats in case of a raid or rising. Two six-pounders were sent up to Mafeking on October 10, and on the 20th a Naval Brigade and guns were sent secretly to the front, where they rendered conspicuous service.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Vice-Admiral Sir R. H. Harris, K.C.B., K.C.M.G.

17/1/02. . . . My relations with your service have always been of the most agreeable kind possible, and I have never looked to

[1] In which Earl Brassey covered over 350,000 miles in the Odyssey described in "A Voyage in the *Sunbeam*."

them for help without meeting with the most ready and generous response. . . .

The anxiety of the situation was reflected in the almost overwhelming pressure at Government House. The days following the outbreak of war were, according to the *Diary*, "days of fearful rush" for the High Commissioner. Interviews with the Admiral, the General, the Prime Minister and other Cape Ministers, and leading Uitlanders followed one another at brief intervals. There were "a lot of difficult questions to settle about Proclamations, censorship of telegrams, position of ships," the relief fund for the refugees who were pouring in from the Republics,[1] and the strategic possibilities of the railways (*Diary*, Oct. 12, 14, 31). There were "interminable conversations with Schreiner" about guns for Kimberley (Oct. 13), and calling out the volunteers (Oct. 15). On the 12th, news arrived that the Boers had cut the telegraph wire and torn up the rails between Maribago and Mafeking, and that they were invading Natal from the Orange Free State. On the 14th, "we heard that Vryburg had gone, and later on that Kimberley was cut off.[2] Boers also seem to be threatening a raid on Colesberg." By the evening "we had lost count of the whole country down to Orange River. . . . News all the afternoon still bad."

Extract from Diary.

Oct. 17. News received about fighting at Mafeking last week. . . . Kimberley now completely surrounded, and Boers all over Bechuanaland, Griqualand, and Barkly West. . . . The usual wild rush all day. . . .

Oct. 18. Very bad telegram in from Natal. We are slowly being surrounded and our force unwisely split up. This gives me great uneasiness. . . .

Oct. 21. . . . Telegram from Governor Natal showing White heavily engaged at Elands Laagte, while enemy once more attacking Dundee. . . . Situation in Natal intensely critical. . . .

Oct. 23. . . . The Dundee garrison is falling back on Lady-

[1] To meet the needs of the flood of British refugees from the Republics, many of them almost destitute, Sir Alfred appealed for a Lord Mayor's Fund. A representative Committee was appointed to distribute it (Oct. 11–15. Cd. 43, pp. 39, 162–4).

[2] Thus the guns, which Mr. Schreiner had at last consented to send up from the Cape, never reached Kimberley.

smith. . . . It is an anxious business till one knows that they get there safely.

Oct. 26. Day of wild rush and considerable consternation. . . . *Braemar* arrived. Prince Christian Victor [1] and Colonel Gough who were on board of her came to dinner. . . .

Oct. 27. Rode before breakfast. . . . Very great rush in the morning, during which I had Council, etc. . . . Boer forces closing in upon Ladysmith. . . .

Oct. 28. I had my usual interviews in morning.[2] . . . The General came to see me in the afternoon, also the Prime Minister for a second time. . . .

On October 28 and 29, news from Ladysmith was anxiously awaited. But for some days no news came. Then came "Black Monday," with the news of White's reverse before Ladysmith.

Diary resumed.

Oct. 30 (*Monday*). . . . I again saw Schreiner and Solomon about questions of contraband. After dinner got a very bad telegram from Natal, where White seems to have had a most unsuccessful and foolish engagement. . . .

Of the Proclamations referred to in the *Diary*, two were issued on October 12. The first, signed by the High Commissioner, declared guilty of High Treason all persons residing within the limits of the Order in Council of 9th May, 1891 (*v.* Vol. I, Ch. II), who should aid or abet H.M. enemies, or who, having taken the oath of allegiance, should bear arms against the Queen. The second, signed by the Governor in Council and the Prime Minister, Mr. Schreiner, warned all persons in the Cape Colony to abstain from seditious acts or words, or from aiding and abetting either of the enemy Republics (Milner Papers, VIII, iv, 53).

It was hoped that these Proclamations would stop the rising of disaffected Dutch Afrikanders in the Cape Colony, although it was recognized that the crossing of their boundary by a Free State or

[1] H.H. proceeded to Durban and joined General Hildyard's staff. Unhappily, to the grief of all who knew that modest, brave and kindly scion of the Royal House, he died of fever at Pretoria a year later, when on active service with the King's Royal Rifles.

[2] Throughout this critical period Sir Alfred usually began his day by seeing Mr. Eliot and Mr. (Sir Thomas) Price, the heads of the railways, and Mr. French, the Postmaster-General. He thus obtained information from a wide area which proved of the utmost value to the military authorities. Cf. W. B. Worsfold, "Lord Milner's Work in South Africa," p. 306.

S.A.R. Commando would inevitably be the signal for a rising along the northern border in Bechuanaland. With only four battalions and practically no artillery available, it would be impossible to keep the Boers out of the Colony until the arrival of reinforcements. General Forestier-Walker had sent every man to the front, and so long as they could hold advanced positions there, the enemy would be prevented from using the railways. Every day and every man was of importance.

Proclamations of Martial Law throughout the Colony at the same time, together with an intimation that invaders of British territory, if not in uniform, would be treated not as belligerents but as bandits, would probably have prevented much of the trouble that ensued. Martial Law was proclaimed in Natal October 15–23,[1] and north of the Orange River on the 16th ; [2] but the High Commissioner could not persuade Schreiner to take similar action in the Cape Colony until mid-November, and then only in districts overrun with rebels. Believing in President Steyn's assurance that the Free Staters would not invade the Colony, Schreiner had obstructed up to the eve of hostilities the most necessary measures for defence, lest they should be deemed provocative. He had publicly expressed the hope that, in the event of war, the Colony would remain as a haven of refuge.

But when Steyn asked him if this meant that it would not be used as a base of operations, he had to reply that he and his colleagues must render every assistance to the Imperial Government—" We are not equal to the task of taking up such a quarrel." [3] For though many of the leading men of his party advocated this policy of neutrality, and the refusal of the use of ports and railways of the Colony by the Imperial forces, yet it was obvious that such acts of open disloyalty would compel the Governor to dismiss them. Schreiner's position was admittedly very difficult. He held office as the representative of the opponents of the British party in South Africa, and by the will of the Bond politicians, who looked to him to forward the Afrikander cause. Half his Cabinet sympathized almost openly with the Boers. His own subtle mind and political address enabled him to adjust the balance between his loyalty as a British subject and his intense patriotism as an Afrikander. But

[1] Cd. 43, pp. 159–62, 173–5 ; Cd. 261, p. 24.

[2] Cd. 43, pp. 136–8, 224–38.

[3] W. P. Schreiner to H. de Villiers (Eric Walker, " Life of Lord de Villiers," p. 363).

only the remorseless energy and untiring patience of the High Commissioner compelled him to face the logic of facts, and to take, step by step, actions which would have had more beneficial effect if taken at once and at large.

Schreiner argued, then, that the Dutch colonists would interpret the proclamation of Martial Law as the preliminary step to compelling them to take up arms against their own kin, and that it would thus provoke the civil war he desired to prevent. It was not until rebellion was rife in the Stormberg district, following upon invasion by the Free State commandos, that he consented to the proclamation of Martial Law over a considerable part of the Colony (Nov. 16). It was then too late, so far as most of the districts were concerned. The stable door was not closed until the horse had been stolen. For in the meantime preparations for rebellion, including rifle practice, had been allowed to go on unchecked, whilst the military authorities had been prevented from commandeering supplies or disarming suspects. And the Bond organ, *Ons Land*, remained at liberty to preach or condone rebellion.

The High Commissioner's correspondence with Ministers concerning the administration of Martial Law (Nov., Dec., '99) is given fully in Cd. 420, pp. 1–8, 14–25.

Extract from Minute. Sir A. Milner to Ministers.

29/12/99. . . . It is difficult in the present state of affairs to confine the operation of Martial Law to particular narrow areas, inasmuch as the direction which the invasion will take, the quarters in which insurrection may break out, and the consequent movements of the troops, cannot possibly be foreseen except within very wide limits. The whole value of the exceptional powers conferred by Martial Law is to enable the military authorities to take certain precautionary measures with the utmost promptitude. To wait till a particular place is either directly threatened by the enemy, or the actual scene of disturbance, before applying Martial Law, is to wait till the principal use of its application is gone. . . .

In place of Martial Law, Schreiner recommended the use of sweet reason. He hoped that the Dutch colonists might be kept quiet by conciliatory speeches until the British army had established its superiority. Mr. Sauer, a member of his Cabinet, went on a mission of this kind to the north-eastern districts. At Dordrecht he urged, it is said, a large meeting of the inhabitants to remain

loyal, on the grounds that the British were sure to win. But after listening to his speech, a deputation visited the Free State Commandant Olivier at Barkly East and made arrangements for his reception at Dordrecht on December 2.[1]

A telegram from Commandant Olivier, which was subsequently found in the Orange Free State, threw what Sir Alfred described as a "startling and unexpected light on the subject."

Extract from Telegram. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

24/10/00. . . . The importance of this telegram lies in the fact that it gives Commandant Olivier's own account of the communications which passed at Barkly East on the 28th November between himself and the deputation which left Dordrecht the day before, as the result of the large meeting addressed by Mr. Sauer, then Commissioner of Public Works. Its ostensible object was to urge the Commandant not to proceed to Dordrecht, and it was composed of Mr. P. de Wet, M.L.A. (now in gaol accused of high treason), Mr. O. S. Vermooten (sentenced at Grahamstown to four years' imprisonment for the same crime), the Reverend J. F. Marais, Mr. S. J. Marais, and Mr. Hargrove, who went as an "unofficial member." Commandant Olivier's description (28/11/99) of their message is as follows: "To-day, already, I received the second deputation from Dordrecht not to come to Dordrecht; this is asked officially, but privately they say that this is only a blind, and that we must come at once."

Mr. Merriman, also, sent a curious exhortation to his friends to keep quiet:

Extract from Letter. Mr. Merriman to Mr. de Wet.

14/11/99. . . . I have not written to you because I am not sure that you will be in town, but I have from time to time communicated with our friend Smit as to the state of affairs. I am sure you are doing your best to keep things quiet, however strong the feelings, the natural feelings of people may be. . . . Beyond overrunning defenceless country, the Boers have not accomplished anything, and the very large force that will advance will be irresistible. They have fought gallantly and made their foes respect them; but it is hopeless. For our people to rise would be sheer madness, and only lead to the loss of our liberties, whereas by sitting still we may exercise some influence over the settlement. It is a sad time and we have to swallow a great deal, but I am sure that patience is the only course that offers even a hope of peace in

[1] Cd. 43, p. 220; 261, pp. 47, 48.

the future. I hope you have seen our friends, for whom I feel more deeply than I can tell you. . . . Piet du Toit is doing his best across the river, but I am afraid he has a most up-hill task. It is a great blunder the Orange Free State coming across ; it does them no good and complicates the position greatly. . . .

The desirability of dismissing such a Ministry had, of course, been considered. Immediately after the outbreak of war, Chamberlain consulted the High Commissioner. But Sir Alfred replied that the balance of advantage was in favour of retaining them in office, unless they seriously interfered with the conduct of military operations.

Extract from Telegram. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

11/10/99. . . . I quite agree with all you say. It is fearfully hampering to have to act with present Ministers, and involves certain grave risks. On the other hand risk of dismissing them at this juncture is greater. It would certainly lead to sporadic risings in the Colony, which, especially while our garrison is so weak, we must, as long as possible, avoid. Ministers do not hamper movement of troops, though they object to general calling out of volunteers or to enlistment of irregulars in Colony, except for defence of specific endangered post, such as Kimberley. Their argument is, that, if loyalists are enrolled, Colonial Boers may not keep quiet. They are, I believe, sincere in this. They have privately instructed Magistrates and Field Cornets to do everything in their power to keep people quiet and will (publish?) proclamation against treasonable practices the moment war begins. I think it best to give them the chance of preventing risings. If they fail, there will be no longer any object in delaying formation of irregular corps on our side, and I am quietly making what preparations I can for that end. There is a great difficulty about telegrams. I think that strong request from H.M. Govt. for establishing censorship might help me with Ministers in this respect.

Nor was the policy of conciliation confined to equivocal speeches and objections to Martial Law. It was the same with measures for defence. Loyalists at the Cape were at least as eager to serve their country as were other British citizens of the Empire. But it was not until the whole country from Kimberley to Orange River was in the hands of the enemy, that Schreiner would consent to the calling out of the Volunteer Corps for garrison duty (Oct. 16). The Imperial Light Horse, discouraged by Sir William Butler at the Cape, had found a welcome in Natal, and soon distinguished

itself in action. But the raising of additional forces to protect the Colony from invasion was steadily opposed by the Cape Ministry. All defensive preparations before the war had been strongly objected to by Schreiner as likely to hurt the susceptibilities of the Republics. All measures for the defence of British territory he now as resolutely opposed, for fear of provoking rebellion amongst their sympathizers. Nor was the raising of additional volunteer forces, whether in South Africa or elsewhere, regarded with favour by the British War Office. British regular officers were inclined to regard them as of little use, although there were resident in South Africa numbers of men experienced in local warfare and Boer tactics, the value of whose services was proved beyond dispute in the following year. But their employment was at first sanctioned with reluctance by the War Office, and was hedged round with every possible restriction. Mr. Amery [1] quotes as typical the matter of rates of pay, to which Sir Alfred refers below (p. 26). The War Office would only sanction the rates of pay locally settled for the Cape Volunteer Corps, on condition that they should be disbanded on the arrival of the Army Corps !

The High Commissioner argued unremittingly for the enlistment of local forces. Immediately after Buller's arrival, Sir Alfred submitted to him a lengthy Minute (Milner Papers, X, iii, 59 and 78), in which he urged the necessity of at once enrolling a Volunteer Corps and a local Mounted Corps to safeguard the East London and Queen's Town line. He went carefully into details, and recommended Colonel Ewart, Colonel (Major-General Sir E. Y.) Brabant, and Mr. (Brig.-Gen. the Hon. Sir Charles) Crewe for this purpose (Nov. 2). Two days later, when by the despatch of 600 volunteers to guard the line to De Aar Cape Town was left with only 500 men for all purposes, he suggested that this was running too great a risk, considering the feeling of the adjoining districts. He therefore proposed that the Volunteer force should be increased, and that an irregular force should be raised mainly from the Refugees, as had been done in Natal, since " it seems to me that in the time immediately before us we shall require all the men we can get " (Milner Papers, X, iii, 105).

Buller readily agreed, and sanctioned the raising of Brabant's Horse and the South African Light Horse, and, in Natal, of the Imperial Light Infantry, and presently the Colonial Scouts. On another point the General disregarded Sir Alfred's advice with

[1] " *The Times* History of the War in South Africa," III, p. 92.

unhappy results. He withdrew the garrisons of Naauwpoort and Stormberg (Nov. 3), whose safety was endangered by invaders from the Free State and the prospect of a rising in the Colony in their rear. The High Commissioner was strongly opposed to such withdrawal, for he was well aware that it would encourage the disaffected. It was, indeed, an unfortunate decision. For though their retention would have partaken of the nature of bluff, reinforcements were due to arrive from England in a week's time, and a policy of bluff in the hands of capable commanders who knew the country was precisely what was proving successful at Mafeking and Kimberley.[1]

On November 3 Martial Law was proclaimed within a limited district around De Aar and Hopetown, but Buller desired it to be extended to four miles on either side of the railway from Cape Town to the Orange River (Milner Papers, X, iii, 4 and 76).

Extract from Letter. Colonel French (Field-Marshal Lord Ypres) to Sir A. Milner.

15/1/00. . . . I have also to thank you for the great assistance your kind and sound advice has given me in the administration of Martial Law, and I have endeavoured to put a check on the well-meant zeal of some of my younger comrades in this direction. If I am fortunate enough to get into Colesberg, some very difficult matters in this way will at once present themselves for settlement, and your clear expression of your views and wishes will be a most valuable guide to me. . . .

The High Commissioner continued to have many wearisome interviews with the Prime Minister as to the measures needed for the defence of the Colony. From the first it had been decided that the natives, whether of Basutoland, Bechuanaland, Natal or the Colony, should not be allowed to attack the Boers, as they were only too anxious to do. But they were to be allowed to repel invasion of their own territories. The task of keeping the Basuto in hand, preventing them at first from attacking the Boers, and then keeping them steadfast in their loyalty to the British when the tale of British reverses was told, was in the hands of Sir Godfrey Lagden. "We are cut off," Sir Alfred telegraphed to him on November 3, "do your best." It was a very capable best. In the Cape Colony the invasion by the Free State commandos at once raised the question of the defence of the Native Territories.

[1] Cf. "*The Times* History of the War in South Africa," II, pp. 266, 280, 281.

The native reserves in Eastern Cape Colony were wholly peopled with Kaffirs still largely in the tribal state. If Boers invaded these fertile regions, there was serious danger that they might provoke a rising of the natives against them, or that the impression might be produced upon the Kaffirs that the British Empire was incapable of protecting them. It was essential to keep the commandos at a distance by making it plain that they would meet with a warm reception. Sir Alfred, however, could not induce Schreiner to take the necessary precautions, and therefore wrote to the G.O.C. :

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to General Sir R. Buller.

6/11/99. [CONFIDENTIAL.] A rather severe passage of arms between me and Schreiner about the native territories. Sir Henry Elliot, the Commandant of the Territories and Griqualand East, is perfectly well able to defend that district, *if allowed to do so*, by using the natives. I tell Schreiner that *now*, before there is any danger of an interruption of communications, Elliot ought to be given general instructions to provide for the defence of the country under his charge *by any means in his power*. Schreiner shies at this, knowing that Elliot will, under such instructions, turn out the natives, if necessary for self-defence. To dismiss Schreiner's Govt. now would do more harm than good. To induce him to do his duty is impossible. But he will agree to wash his hands of the whole business. I suggest that the defence of the whole Colony (Elliot, Cape Mounted Rifles and all) should at once be put under you. Then you can give Elliot orders to look out for himself. That is all he needs. Do you agree ?

Buller, thereupon, requested that, in order to secure complete co-operation between the Imperial and Colonial forces, the latter should be placed under his immediate direction. Ministers concurred, making the proviso that the Cape Police should be retained in the Eastern districts, and that the Cape Mounted Riflemen should not be removed from the Native Territories without the Prime Minister being first consulted (Milner Papers, X, iii, 94–115).

Native levies were then organized under the magistrates of the different districts, and camped near the frontier. This measure had the desired effect. Unrest among the natives died down ; cattle raiding upon the Dutch farmers ceased ; the Boer commandos refrained from invading the native districts ; and, thanks to the prestige of former colonial administrators and Sir Henry Elliot's influence with the natives, the conduct of the native levies was so good that even the disloyalists failed to find any justification for

their outcries against the employment of "savage hordes in British pay."[1]

Extracts from Diary.

Nov. 24. Long talk with Schreiner—mainly about defence of Native Territories. Wearisome argument. . . .

Nov. 25. More than usually heavy day, which included a long wrangle with Schreiner about the defence of Upington. . . .

Nov. 26. . . . I had the officers of the Australian Contingent to dinner, a serviceable lot of men and good fellows. . . .

Nov. 27. . . . Boers got to Molteno to-day. Black look-out in Eastern district. . . .

Dec. 7. . . . The usual interviews . . . including one very unsatisfactory one with Schreiner. . . .

Dec. 21. . . . Very busy trying to raise local corps for Eastern Provinces. . . .

Dec. 26. . . . Saw Schreiner, with whom I had most unsatisfactory talk about Martial Law. . . . Peel[2] . . . has undertaken to help me as a sort of Assistant Private Secretary. . . .

Dec. 29. . . . A very anxious day with rumours of risings in different parts of the Colony flying about. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

29/11/99. . . . I to-day issued a manifesto to the people of the Colony intended especially to remove the impression that the war was part of a scheme for subjugating the Dutch race throughout South Africa, and for depriving the Dutch in the Colony of their constitutional rights.

The manifesto (Nov. 23) declared that "there is absolutely no truth in these allegations. The British Government desires the greatest amount of freedom and self-government for Dutch and British alike. Its object is the extension of freedom and self-government, not their curtailment. The constitution of this Colony is in no danger except from rebellion. H.M. the Queen has during her long reign given innumerable proofs that she does not favour one race at the expense of another."[3] . . .

One instance of the kind of statements which were being made, and which tended to shake the loyalty of a section of the people, is afforded by a mutilated and inaccurate report of a conversation

[1] Cf. Cd. 43, pp. 179–81, 211–13; and "*The Times* History of the War in South Africa," III, pp. 96, 97.

[2] Hon. George Peel.

[3] Cd. 43, pp. 220, 235.

between His Excellency and Mr. James Molteno, a member of Assembly, which was published in the *Daily Chronicle*, November 3. Chamberlain called Sir Alfred's attention to it (Nov. 4). In a communication to the *Cape Times* the High Commissioner described the report as "so imperfect and inaccurate as to be absolutely misleading. Not only are expressions attributed to him which he never used, but the whole tenor of his observations is entirely distorted." In his reply to Chamberlain, he answered Mr. Molteno's memorandum by recounting what he *did* say on that occasion,[1] concluding :

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

30/11/99. . . . I stated what I did consider to be the real root difference between our policy and that of the South African Republic and its sympathizers, viz. that the latter aimed at maintaining throughout South Africa the predominance of a single race, while we were contending for equality. I, personally, had been represented as the enemy of the Dutch population, because I was averse to the attempt to maintain the predominance of one white race over another, irrespective of their relative numbers. But as a matter of fact, if the case was reversed, and the non-Dutch South Africans were trying to oppress their Dutch fellow-countrymen, I should be just as much opposed to them as to the Dutch oligarchy of the Transvaal. It is this opinion, to which I adhere, which is no doubt responsible for Mr. Molteno's statement that I said "I am determined to break the dominion of Afrikanderdom." The use of these words I absolutely deny ; and I deeply regret that they should have been attributed to me. Not only do they breathe a spirit of arrogance and egotism which I hope is not characteristic, but, standing by themselves, they are calculated to convey a wholly false impression of the tenor of the remarks the substance of which I have just stated.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Miss Bertha Synge.

11/12/99. . . . One can only hang on grimly, and hope for better things. The state of this Colony is awful. It simply *reeks with treason.* I have a sad satisfaction in thinking that at least I did not malign people. I was so abused at one time by the ignorant and always befooled British sentimentalists for saying that there was a serious amount of disaffection in the Colony, that I at times began to wonder whether I had not been unjust to these "simple peasants." And now ! Well ! We shall worry through somehow. . . . I am sustained by my own belief in the soundness of the

[1] Cd. 43, pp. 128, 238–40.

wholly misunderstood cause in which we are fighting. It is a war of liberation—from the rule of the Mauser. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lord Selborne.

18/10/99. [CONFIDENTIAL.] . . . We have had a bad week—having lost communication with Rhodesia, and the whole of the Colony north of the Orange River having fallen into the hands of the enemy. It was bound to happen, seeing the inadequate force in the Colony, when war broke out. I won't say where in my opinion blame lies chiefly for this, though I can't help thinking of those 3 batteries which were *ordered out* in June and will be here next week, and which would have altered the whole aspect of the case had they come sooner. But nothing is stupider than to waste time in recriminations. Mafeking may hold out for some time, because there are an exceptional lot of plucky and capable officers in it. Kimberley *ought* to hold out, but there is a large civilian population, which must hamper the defenders. Rhodes, too, unfortunately slipped through to Kimberley, without telling me of his intention, at the last moment, and now keeps on sending me panicky telegrams about immediate relief, which is impossible. . . . If Kimberley falls, we cannot hold the whole of the Colony, perhaps we shall only be able to hold a small bit of it. You see there is another month to be lived through, and the place is seething with sedition. Once they get to Kimberley, O.F.S. will come south on our Eastern Province—perhaps they will do so in any case—and we shall then have to look out for the Ports. Ministers are in a mortal fright, dreading rebellion here, there and everywhere, and equally dreading military movements and precautions which might excite it. I am playing the most extraordinary game, on the one hand urging the military and naval people to use every available man and gun, and raise men wherever they can, on the other hand seeking to screen their movements as much as possible from observation, and to keep them away from points where the population is especially dangerous. It is a most peculiar egg-dance. Can it succeed—for a whole month? . . . *Nous verrons.* . . . No use to prophesy about anything. A great deal, of course, depends on Natal, from which latest accounts are not good. And there is Basutoland to be thought of. Lagden has done wonderfully well so far in keeping the Basuto quiet. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lord Selborne.

26/10/99. [CONFIDENTIAL.] . . . I am sorry to say I have no time to write a despatch by this mail. . . . The pressure of work upon us all here is indescribable. True, I get offers of help from all sides from here as well as England, and I have unloaded a great

deal on to outsiders. But the *absolutely confidential* work remains to be shared by very few, nor could men hastily recruited, even if quite trustworthy, be of much use to us with that. We are all frightfully anxious about Natal. . . . In the Colony itself (except where the invaders are actually tramping round) there has so far been no movement. A judicious mixture of bluff and conciliation seems to have answered thus far, and we have gained a fortnight. I am satisfied that it is best to keep Schreiner as long as I can. He weakens my hand fearfully in some ways, but he does help to keep the Colony quiet. If we can only do that for another 3 weeks (a terribly long time, I own) and thus save our lines of communication from being broken up, it will be worth a lot. . . . We are quite in good heart here, mind you, despite of all our troubles, not the least of which is the inrush of 50–60,000 refugees. One thing is a mercy. No man of any sense can any longer fail to see that the S.A. situation *was* an impossible one, or doubt that at whatever cost the *armed oligarchy* dominating all this sub-continent must be put an end to, if it is to be a place for civilized people to thrive in. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

9/11/99. . . . We have now been at war just 4 weeks, and it is possible to make some estimate of the position. The enemy were more numerous, far better armed as regards artillery, and much better organized than we had any idea of. As you know, I have long been in alarm at their enormous military power, and the steady development of it. But my gloomy view of their power has been surpassed by the reality. No one, for instance, anticipated for a moment that our field artillery would be overpowered by their bringing heavy guns from Johannesburg and Pretoria. Considering, (i) the enormous overmatch, (ii) our great bad luck (blundering ?) in Natal, it is surprising to me that we have not lost more heavily. No doubt we have been hard hit—1,000 men killed and wounded, and at least another 1,000 prisoners, the North cut off, Eastern Bechuanaland, Griqualand West, the Southern Protectorate and our northern border overrun by the enemy. These are great disasters affecting our prestige with white and black, and greatly increasing the numbers of the enemy. But, on the other hand, they also have had some nasty knocks, have lost many lives (which are heavily felt in a small community) *and have not yet taken one place* which we have been able to make an effort to defend. I write this quaking, for one fears every hour for Kimberley. Still, if the transports only arrive to time and in reasonably good order (I fear they have had fearful weather) we may yet save all the

beleaguered places. And then the end will not be far. Supposing we do not do this, that the Army Corps is too late, and that we have to reconquer the greater part of our own country, before reaching theirs, I want you to consider what this involves. It can and ought to be done. The fight ought to be fought out to the bitter end, as otherwise we must make up our minds to be hereafter on sufferance in South Africa. But it will involve a great national effort. We shall require more troops, I fear. . . . I do not myself expect to see this business finished with less than 70,000 men in South Africa under arms at one time on our side. I rather doubt whether home resources will enable us to keep up to that number, therefore I have, despite the difficulties which are being raised on financial grounds, encouraged every hopeful attempt to draw on local recruiting fields. For a long time this was dangerous, as there are certainly more good fighting men in the Colony against us than with us (the bulk of British population being townsmen unused to arms) and I therefore agreed with Schreiner's view that we gained more than we lost by keeping both parties quiet. But now that it is practically certain that all the really bellicose sympathizers with the Republics will join them in any case, there is no object in not calling upon the English fighting men, especially as some of the Eastern Province men supply just that element of good scouting and good riding (and good shooting), in which as a whole we are defective compared with the Boers. The Natal Volunteers and Baden-Powell's men are a good illustration of what the South African Briton can do for himself. Unfortunately he has hitherto always been discouraged—it was part of the old pro-Bond policy —from making himself familiar with the use of arms, so we have to find the rifles, while the recruits on the other side find their own. . . . (2) With all the forces we may be able to put into the field, it will be a slow business wearing out the enemy, while the back-door at Lourenço Marques is open. . . . It is not only the stoppage of food supplies, which I am thinking of, but the stoppage of everything necessary to keep the South African Republic a going concern. As it is, we may be able to deal with contraband, though I am sure a lot of it will get through. But we cannot stop the constant intercourse with Europe, which is so damaging to us, the supply of ordinary goods, including materials for the Mining Industry, or volunteers from Europe and America coming to join the Republican forces. . . . (3) Whether we blockade Delagoa Bay or not, and perhaps even more if we do not blockade Delagoa Bay, a considerable fleet in these waters will be a necessity to us. We must have the greatest freedom of sea-transport, especially as the enemy have the inner lines of communication on land. This means vessels to carry troops, and ships of war to look after them. . . . This is a

letter all "asking for more." . . . It is not that I am a pessimist, but that we have all had such a lesson of the necessity of looking ahead, and providing for untoward contingencies, that I cannot help feeling that it is not too soon to think of the possible needs of two or three months ahead. . . .

General Buller in Natal.

Confronted by the danger in Natal, and by premature appeals for immediate succour from Kimberley, Buller abandoned the plan of campaign which he had concerted with the War Office for an advance upon Pretoria by way of the Orange Free State. The Army Corps intended for that purpose was broken up, and the greater part sent to Natal. Leaving General (Field-Marshal Lord) Methuen to work up from the Orange to the relief of Kimberley, Buller suddenly and secretly left Cape Town (Nov. 22) to take command in Natal. Sir Alfred Milner, who had done his best to dissuade him, was so taken aback by his unannounced departure that, when informed of it that evening, he at first refused to believe it. Telegrams passing between the Boer Presidents show that up till the 15th they were expecting him to advance through the Colony to relieve Kimberley.

Extract from Telegram. President Steyn to President Kruger.

15/11/99. . . . I think the place for his march-through will be Orange River Bridge at Hopetown, as I presume he is concentrating at De Aar.

But on Nov. 27 Kruger informed Steyn that his Agent at Lourenço Marques had warned him to "watch Natal. Buller landed there Saturday." . . .

Methuen, after fighting three successful actions and getting within twenty miles of his objective (Nov. 23–28), was held up on the Modder River, after a costly reverse at Magersfontein (Dec. 11), inflicted upon him by Generals Cronje and De la Rey. General Gatacre, in the south-east, after meeting with a similar fate at Stormberg (Dec. 10), hung on at Sterkstroom, whilst French, by skilful manœuvring, managed to contain a superior force in the neighbourhood of Colesberg.

In the same "Black Week" of December Buller completed his preparations for the relief of Ladysmith by forcing the line of the Tugela at Colenso. By the 14th he had concentrated a force of 18,000 men at Chieveley. On the other side of the river, beyond

Colenso, Louis Botha faced him with six or seven thousand Boers. Against this strong position, which he never properly reconnoitred, Buller launched a blind frontal attack on December 15. But no sooner were his advanced troops checked, than he broke off the battle and abandoned his guns.

Buller has always been blamed for breaking off his attack before more than half his force had been engaged. But it was perhaps fortunate that he did so. For without having secured the hill of Hlangwane on his right flank, he had been pressing on into a trap prepared by the Boers. If Colonel Long had not disobeyed orders and shelled Hlangwane when he found it was occupied by the enemy, nothing, if we accept Sir Percy Fitzpatrick's report of General Botha's subsequent account,[1] could have saved the British army from annihilation. Thus the day ended with 1,100 casualties and the loss of ten guns. "Never," commented General Lyttelton, who was present, "has there been a more deplorable tactical display." [2]

Nor was this all. Buller promptly cabled home that he was beaten. He proposed to "occupy a defensive position" and "to let Ladysmith go." [3] He did more. He sent a message to the defender of Ladysmith suggesting that he should fire away his ammunition and make terms with the enemy.[4] So incredible did this message seem to White that he at first refused to believe in its authenticity. "The loss of 12,000 men," he replied, "would be a heavy blow to England. We must not yet think of that."

Generals were not easily *dégommés* in those days. Such failure in the field, and advice to another General to surrender, were not deemed sufficient grounds for recalling Buller. He was merely urged to make another attempt to relieve Ladysmith. Otherwise, the Government, and more particularly Mr. Balfour, cool and courageous, rose to the occasion. Steps were promptly taken for hurrying out reinforcements, and for enrolling volunteers both at home and in the Colonies. Lord Roberts was appointed Commander-in-Chief in South Africa, and Lord Kitchener his Chief of

[1] "South African Memories," pp. 150–4.

[2] "Eighty Years," p. 211.

[3] General Sir R. Buller to Secretary of State for War, December 15.

[4] This "astounding suggestion," as General Lyttelton termed it, was not revealed to the British public until it was published by Mr. Leo Maxse in the *National Review*. Cf. Sir Mortimer Durand, "Life of Sir George White," II, p. 158; Lord Newton, "Life of Lord Lansdowne," pp. 163–7; General Sir N. Lyttelton, "Eighty Years," p. 230.

Staff, an appointment which the latter in private conversation had prophesied some months before (June, 1899), and upon which Lord Salisbury now insisted. Lord Wolseley, however, still regarded Buller as the General most fitted to deal with the situation, and informed the Queen that he regretted his supercession.[1]

The public also, who knew nothing of military matters, and Buller's men, who appreciated his personal courage and his care for their comfort, retained their confidence in him to the end, in spite of his tactical blunders, in spite of his strange hesitations in pressing home attacks, and in spite of his still more serious failures to co-operate with Roberts. The effect of those blunders, combined with the magnificent courage, determination and endurance of the Boers, was to prolong the struggle beyond all reason or probability, and to add enormously to the loss of life and material damage inflicted upon the country by the war.

With the appointment of Roberts and Kitchener the Black Week of Colenso ended with a ray of light piercing the gloom of defeatism and military incompetence. Fortunately the enemy, failing in every direction to exploit his advantages, allowed the precious weeks to slip away. But no Englishman who lived through it will forget the humiliation of those defeats in the field, or the storms of abuse from abroad, where, whilst the Boers "annexed" Bechuanaland and the Diamond Fields, the theory was assiduously propagated, with the aid of funds which had been conveyed to Europe before the war, that a small, peaceful and harmless people were being attacked by a brutal Imperial Power for the sake of their gold mines. But at such moments of adversity the British nation has always shown itself at its best. It closed its ranks, grimly determined to see the business through, cheered by splendid demonstrations of loyalty and of support from the Colonies, which recognized that the cause of the Uitlanders was the cause of British freedom across the seas, and that the crisis of the Empire was their own. For both Great Britain and the Empire were now awakened to the magnitude of the effort required of them.

From the beginning of July, 1899, a stream of offers of military aid in the event of hostilities had begun to flow in from British Colonies outside South Africa, a stream which became a veritable torrent as news of early reverses was received (*v.* Cd. 18). The struggle with the Boers demonstrated for the first time the solidarity of the British Empire. Many continental critics had long believed

[1] Buckle, G. E., "Letters of Queen Victoria," 3rd Ser., III, pp. 435–7.

that the moment Great Britain found herself in difficulties, her Colonies would seize the opportunity to throw off their allegiance to the Crown. The fact was "very otherwise." From Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand, and every portion of the Empire, came help and offers of help in men, money and material. The spirit thus demonstrated and fostered by the experience of a brotherhood in arms, rendered it possible later on to take steps in the direction of organizing the defence of the Empire, based upon a co-ordination of its immense resources. And having thus fought in the cause of a united Empire against the threat of dismemberment, the self-governing Dominions not only helped greatly to preserve it, but also themselves took a forward step in their political status and relation with the Empire.

Buller's departure for Natal, leaving what was practically a military interregnum at the Cape, threw upon the High Commissioner's shoulders a heavier burden of responsibility than ever for seeing that the resources of the Colony were organized to repel the invader and check rebellion. All this time Milner gave the military authorities "unfailing support and wise counsel," as Lord Roberts testified, showing himself "one whose courage never faltered." "It is no detraction," wrote Mr. Amery,[1] "from the good work done by General Forestier-Walker and his Staff to admit the greatness of the debt they owed to the energy and resourcefulness, the knowledge and personal influence of the High Commissioner, and to the co-operation of his military Secretary, Major Hanbury Williams."

The following letters indicate plainly enough Sir Alfred's views as to the military and political situation.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. James Rendel.

5/12/00. . . . Nobody can contend that Buller's campaign was a good one. He came out with the right idea, but he allowed circumstances needlessly to deflect him from it. He made a great mistake in going to Natal, as I always knew—and begged him not to. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

14/12/99. . . . It is 5 weeks since I wrote you a private letter. . . . During no part of the time has the position been other than an anxious one, but it is only in the last day or two that it has changed suddenly and gravely for the worse. Gatacre's extra-

[1] "*The Times* History of the War in South Africa," III, p. 98.

ordinary performance at Stormberg, at which we can only gasp, will cost us, I fear, great part of the Colony, and may throw the Native Territories and Basutoland, which were anxiously watching the war in this corner, into chaos. But this is even less serious than Methuen's fix. There seems little chance of his being able to fight his way to Kimberley. The enemy in front of him is too strong. On the other hand retirement, leaving Kimberley to its fate will have an effect throughout the Colony which it is terrible to contemplate. Under these circumstances, nothing can put us into a really good position except at Ladysmith, the relief of our beleagured force and a heavy defeat of the Boers. But experience forbids one to count on anything so favourable as this. We may relieve Ladysmith, but if I know the Boers rightly, they will take care that it costs a heavy price, and will get out of the way before we can make them suffer in return. The question presents itself, how under these circumstances can we bring the Republics to their knees? My belief is that, after all that has happened, they can only be worn out —sickened, that is to say, of the war, our powers of endurance being greater than theirs, if only we have the resolution. Of course, developments are possible, which would render this policy impracticable, for instance, if they overran the whole of the Colony, drove us back on the ports and entrenched themselves outside them. But it is not necessary to assume the worst. On the more reasonable hypothesis that, even if we fare ill during the next few weeks, we shall retain sufficient of the Colony to form a rallying ground for a future advance, where are we to get the force to conquer a victorious enemy, greatly increased in numbers by recruits from the invaded portions of the Colony? I believe that a great deal still can and ought to be done by drawing on the fighting material of the Colony itself. . . . (*After further insistence upon the importance of raising local forces and preventing supplies of food and stores of war coming into Delagoa Bay, Sir Alfred concluded:*) The staunchness and loyalty of our own people in the Colonies is extraordinary, and despite the trials of the last few weeks, they seem not in any way to have lost faith in the ultimate and complete triumph of Great Britain. The signs of unanimity and resolution on the part of the British public are a great support to us all. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

27/12/99. [VERY CONFIDENTIAL.] . . . You can imagine better than I can describe what life I am leading at present. My failures, many doubtless, and grave, are really almost attributable to one cause—that I am so desperately single-handed. I cannot speak too highly of the ability and wonderful devotion of my whole staff.

I do not mean that I am not well served. What I mean is that I have to play so many other rôles in the play besides my own. Ministers, though no doubt it was politic to keep them to avoid a widespread revolt, are a terrible drag upon me. Precautions and prompt action, which ought to be taken as a matter of course, have to be dragged out of them by hours of weary wrangling, in which I have to keep my temper and conceal the overwhelming disgust which I feel at these faint and sickly rebels or pragmatic dupes. And then the military! Am I jaundiced in thinking that we have been somewhat singular in our misfortunes in that respect? As a matter of fact there is nothing that I think more dangerous than a civilian mixing himself up in matters military, and with what is purely military I never have interfered. But what is purely military in this country? Every military movement is so dependent upon political conditions and forecasts, that there can be no sound strategy without taking these into account. And also I am compelled to warn, suggest, remind—to worry, in fact, the soldiers in 100 ways, much to their annoyance doubtless (though they are very courteous) and to the absolute wearing to shreds of myself, without as much result as might be hoped. It was a great mistake Buller going to Natal. I always thought so. The military situation there no doubt is difficult, and bad. But it is comparatively simple. Here it is intensely complicated. He cannot judge the position here from Natal. All his directions show it. While he was here he showed grasp. For those 3 weeks I certainly did feel in one important respect a sense of relief which I never had before or since. But in Natal he has his own big job on hand. He can no longer follow the ins and outs of this complicated game. Hence he directs little, and when he does direct, not as it seems to me with the same insight and decision as he showed when on the spot. We are therefore just drifting here militarily without initiative, without foresight. Meanwhile our 3 defeats are producing their inevitable effect. My great hope is in the slowness of the enemy. With all their splendid military qualities, they have not yet shown the power of using their opportunities. About the future. No use thinking now of anything but how to end the war successfully from a military point of view. I own it is not easy to see how this is to be done. Delagoa Bay has now become in my judgment absolutely the decisive point. It has always been very important. It is now all important. We cannot hope to beat the Boers in decisive battles in the field. They will never meet us there. But we can by Fabian tactics, wear them out, even if all beleaguered garrisons were to fall. But it is very much more difficult and slower if we are to have all the world tumbling over one another to help and succour them through that open door. However, I will not

labour a point, of the immense importance of which I am confident that you are aware. Before this reaches you another of great moment will have decided itself, viz. whether we are or are not to have a rising in the Colony *outside* the invaded districts. If there is no rising now there never will be. The opportunity is golden, the incitement incessant. A good deal depends, perhaps, on the stock of ammunition in the farm-houses. We have been quietly slipping away the stock in the hands of traders, so if they were relying on that, in many districts they will find themselves sold. I feel very greatly the need of a sound constitutional lawyer to advise me. . . . The questions involving constitutional law thicken upon me as rebellion progresses. They will be none the less difficult, when it is subdued. What are we to do with the constitution of the Colony? The rebels of to-day cannot surely be allowed just to turn round and become the voters of to-morrow. There are no less than 5 members of the House at present actually with the enemy. I don't know that they are under arms, but they are certainly in the invaded territory, on practically friendly terms with the invaders. There are 18 seats out of 95 for constituencies overrun by the enemy. And this anomalous state of affairs is bound to grow worse before the present crisis is over. Under the circumstances I cannot but feel that we must face some temporary suspension or amendment of the Cape Constitution (after the precedent of Canada in 1835–40), and this must be done from home, either by Act of Parliament, or (seeing that the Constitution here was introduced by Letters Patent and an Order in Council, not by Statute) any change of it might be made by the same method. . . .

Whilst Sir Alfred thus, rightly enough, recurred again and again to the importance of controlling Delagoa Bay and stopping supplies coming in for the Boer armies through Lourenço Marques, the British Government was unwilling to take high-handed measures. The hostile feeling prevalent on the Continent had spread to Portugal, making it difficult for that Government to accept arrangements proposed by Great Britain for stopping shipments of goods for the enemy landed at Delagoa Bay (Milner Papers, XV, iii, 365). Blockade could not be declared, since Portugal was both friendly and neutral. Nor could German goods conveyed in German bottoms to a German firm, say at Angra Pequeña, be overhauled or seized at sea.[1]

When the Boer Republics flung down the gauntlet, it was generally believed that they had reason to rely upon some promise

[1] Cf. Buckle, G. E., "Letters of Queen Victoria," 3rd Ser., III, pp. 428–30.

of support from Germany. Immediately after the outbreak of the war, the question of intervention was raised in Petrograd, Paris, and Berlin. The Russian Ambassadors in Paris and Berlin approached the French and German Governments. But M. Delcassé, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, had already decided to work for a *rapprochement* with Great Britain. Unless France was ready to join with Russia and herself, Germany could not risk a conflict with Great Britain. "So long as Germany has to reckon with the hostility of her French neighbour," so ran her answer to the Russian Government, "she could not entertain a suggestion for intervening in the Boer War." But if such reasons of expediency deprived the Boers of the open succour on which they had counted from Europe, there were good grounds for believing that munitions of war were being carried to them by German mail steamers through Delagoa Bay.

Acting on information to this effect, British ships of war stopped the *Herzog*, *General*, and *Bundesrath* on the high seas, and escorted them into Durban to be searched (Jan., 1900). The information, which was probably intentionally misleading, proved to be false. The first two ships were soon found to be innocent, and were promptly released. The *Bundesrath* was detained for a more thorough search. Great indignation was aroused in Germany. The incident was exploited by Tirpitz and the party which was anxious to increase the German Navy. Lord Salisbury forestalled an ultimatum by informing the German Ambassador that no contraband having been found on board the *Bundesrath*, orders had been sent for her release. Compensation would be paid to her owners, and German ships would not again be searched on mere suspicion. A highly arrogant account of the affair was rendered to the Reichstag by the German Foreign Secretary, Count von Bülow, and a bill was introduced a few days later (Feb., 1900) doubling the strength of that fixed by the Navy Bill of two years before.[1] In February, on learning that an attack upon Walfisch Bay was expected, Admiral Harris, at the request of the High Commissioner (Feb. 7, 1900), sent the *Niobe* thither, giving Captain Winsloe a free hand.

Plans for Settlement.

In spite of early checks, for those who knew the real character of the British people at home and overseas and their immense

[1] Cd. 33.

strength, the result of the war was always a foregone conclusion. Already Chamberlain, Milner and Lord Selborne were turning their thoughts to the problems of post-war reconstruction and the civil administration of the new Colonies. Already it was practically decided that the High Commissioner should leave the Cape and become the first Governor of the Transvaal Colony. From the very beginning, it will be seen, it was contemplated that the Boers were to be granted self-government as soon as it could safely be entrusted to them. An interim Crown Colony Government, it was thought, should be granted to the annexed Colonies, to be followed in due time by responsible government. Large sums were to be provided by Great Britain for reconstruction and compensation. No attempt was to be made to force Federation, but the opportunity might be used for bringing about a Customs, railway, and postal union. Milner's own proposals proved to be a remarkable forecast of British policy for the next six years.

Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, who was in England when the war broke out, consulted him as to the advisability of his approaching Chamberlain with his schemes for immigration, irrigation, and railway construction after the war. His letter concluded :

21/10/99. . . . You have practically all England at your back now, and the future is your own. I cannot express my congratulations and gratitude to you for the magnificent handling—the patience, sagacity, courage and tenacity of the past months.

Sir Alfred replied :

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Sir Percy Fitzpatrick.

28/11/99. [VERY CONFIDENTIAL.] . . . It seems ill-omened to talk of eventual settlement when things are in such an awful mess. . . . Still, it must have an end, and that end must be our victory. So though it may be premature, it is still necessary to think what to do with it. One thing is quite evident. The *ultimate* end is a self-governing white Community, supported by *well-treated* and *justly governed* black labour from Cape Town to Zambesi. There must be one flag, the Union Jack, but under it equality of races and languages. Given *equality* all round, English must prevail, though I do not think, and do not wish, that Dutch should altogether die out. I think, though all South Africa should be *one Dominion* with a common government dealing with Customs, Railways, and Defence, perhaps also with Native policy, a considerable amount of freedom should be left to the several States. But though this

is the ultimate end, it would be madness to attempt it at once. There must be an interval, to allow the British population of the Transvaal to return and increase, and the mess to be cleared up, before we can apply the principle of self-government to the Transvaal. . . . Finance may be a difficulty at first. There will be any amount of damage to be made good, not only in the Transvaal. Natal and the Colonial loyalists, who have been so atrociously plundered, cannot be left without some immediate relief, though, of course, their only real compensation will be the greater prosperity of the whole country under a just, progressive government. Still, I cannot think finance, though difficult to arrange, can really long be a stumbling-block in a country so rich as the Transvaal. The ordinary cost of administration (without Mausers and Creuzot guns and 23,000,000 rounds, and corruption, and Secret Service) will be capable of great reduction. Some part of the difference might go to pay interest on a loan for the compensation of those who have been ruined in the struggle for freedom and prosperity. How long the period of unrepresentative government may last, I cannot say. I, for one, would be for shortening it as much as possible, but not before a loyal majority is assured. As for the Boer himself, provided I am once sure of having broken his political predominance, I should be for leaving him the greatest amount of individual freedom. First beaten, then fairly treated, and not too much worried on his own " plaats " in his own conservative habits, I think he will be peaceful enough. It is the interested and intriguing outsider who has stirred him up to all this mischief. . . . I pray for a decisive result. A patch up would be awful. But a decisive result means a tremendous and sustained effort on the part of the British people. I feel sure that you will do your share to keep them up to it. . . .

Already, Lord Selborne, writing from the Colonial Office, had asked for Milner's ideas :

Extract from Letter. Lord Selborne to Sir A. Milner.

10/11/99. [SECRET] . . . It is well not to divide the skin of the boar before he is speared but it may be tentatively permissible to consider what would be the best thing to do with the skin supposing that the spear is driven home. In fact, we are occupying our spare and unspare time alike in thinking. I don't think that Mr. Chamberlain has let his opinions finally crystallize yet—I know I have not—— But his mind is constantly running on the question. At present I think it roughly shapes out in this way. S.A.R. and O.F.S. to be both annexed and not united to each other or to any Colony. An interim Crown Colony Government to be followed

by the responsible government colony system in both cases. Zululand in the S.A.R. and Swaziland both to be added to Natal. No attempt to force on Federation. Use this occasion to force a customs, postal and railway union? . . . Who is to be the Governor (of the Transvaal) during the interim period? On him will fall the gigantic task of reconstruction and cleaning the Augean stable. Do you wish to do this yourself? If so, you could not remain Governor of the Cape, I take it? but you would have to remain High Commissioner. Who under these circumstances would you like to have as Governor of the Cape? All this again is a mere preliminary sketch, but it will serve to elicit a sketch in return, but from a master hand. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lord Selborne.

30/11/99. [CONFIDENTIAL.] I can only give at present a very provisional reply. The question of treating this as anything else than a war of conquest is settled by the invasion and annexation of our territory and the deliberate intention of the Republics, framed I believe with every hope of success, to turn us out of South Africa. It is evident that either we must absolutely smash them politically, or our own expulsion from this part of the Continent, even if not immediately effected, can only be a matter of time. Assuming us to prevail, there will now be a double problem confronting us—viz.: what to do with the Republics and what to do with our own revolted Colony. As regards the former, I think autocratic government for a time inevitable, till the mess is cleared up. I should be happy enough myself to try and clean the Augean stable at Pretoria, and, if that were my destiny, I should not ask for a better Colonial Secretary than Fiddes. But I think you will have to find a man for Bloemfontein. I do not know that it would be necessary to break up South Africa entirely, as in the interests of the future Dominion it would be better not to do this. The conquered Republics might be put under the High Commissioner, and if he found his time absorbed by one of them, a Commissioner, nominally under him, though really with a very great amount of independence, might be set up at Bloemfontein, and a Lieutenant-Governor temporarily run the show at the Cape. I think Lagden would be an excellent man for Bloemfontein. He knows the Free State well, and his second in command is quite fit to take over Basutoland. A much graver question is that of the Cape. Things here will be exceedingly difficult, but it is impossible to foresee the exact nature and extent of the difficulty till we know how far rebellion is going to spread. If it is confined to the Districts at present in revolt: Bechuanaland, Griqualand West, Barkley East,

Colesberg, Albert, Aliwal and Wodehouse, it might be best to cut off these from the Colony (which would then probably be sure to have a loyalist majority in the House) and attach them, as conquered districts, to the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, thus bringing them for a time under virtually despotic government. But rebellion may spread much further, and if that happens, and we have to reconquer the bulk of the Colony, the constitution will have to be suspended, and we shall have for a time the whole of South Africa, except Natal, under the Crown Colony system. . . . There are some other points which I want you to think over at once. Assuming that we beat the Republics sufficiently to get the war out of our territory into theirs, the first thing necessary, even before the termination of the war, will be to restore order in our revolted districts. We ought not to waste troops in this, nor are they the best material. A strong Imperial mounted police is the thing, of which the nucleus exists in the irregular corps now being formed such as Brabant's Horse and the South African Light Horse. They ought to be amalgamated with the Cape Police and both taken over for the time being as Imperial forces and should be used to pacify the revolted Districts and restore the Magistrates. . . . Things look as black as possible to-day and it takes a good [deal] of courage to compel oneself to think of the time—still apparently so distant—when we shall be masters.

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir A. Milner.

6/12/99. [SECRET.] . . . I need not say that we feel all sympathy with you, as, although the strain here is very great, it must necessarily be much worse on the spot. . . . Our policy of extreme patience, coupled with full explanation of the issue, has been thoroughly successful, and the country now understands the South African question as they have never done before. It was all very well for you and for me to know, as we did, what a tremendous issue was behind such questions as Franchise and Alien Immigration ; but the public did not. . . . Even some of our strongest opponents are at last awake to the intentions of the Transvaal Government, and bad as this war is, and heavy as are the sacrifices which it entails, they see that if we had gone on in the old rut for a year or two longer, nothing could have saved South Africa to the British Crown. The Liberal party as a whole have behaved extremely well, but I cannot say as much for their leaders. Rosebery and his supporters have now spoken out well, but they preserved absolute silence until it was quite clear which way the tide was going. A word from Rosebery a few weeks after the Bloemfontein Conference would have been worth scores of orations at the present time. Campbell-

Bannerman, who wobbled at first, has succeeded in climbing down on the wrong side—that is the Morley-Labouchere side—of the fence, but he has lost influence, and I do not think there can be any serious attack upon us, except, perhaps, for the military conduct of the war, and, later on, upon the settlement. The vast mass of the people, however, have clearly made up their mind that this last must be thorough. They will not be satisfied without the resumption of British authority over the two Republics, and will rightly insist on all precautions to make another aggression or disturbance absolutely impossible. Although we do not seem nearer to the end of the war, I still have an optimistic feeling that if we can only get some great victory . . . we may see the whole movement suddenly collapse. I am therefore constantly thinking of the future, and have tried to get something on paper. Possibly I may be able before long to send you my ideas for your consideration. You will, however, understand that if you are full of urgent work connected with the war, you are not to bother about anything else. In any case we must have the fullest consultation before anything is decided. We must also consult Natal and endeavour to make it certain that the settlement will be satisfactory to that Colony. As regards the Cape, it is difficult to see how we can take advice from Schreiner and his Ministry. Possibly before then there may be a change, and we may have someone on whose loyalty and full sympathy we can absolutely depend. If not, there are other ways of finding out the opinion of the loyal colonists, whether British or Dutch. We must not, however, allow the Bond to dictate the terms of a peace to which they have not contributed. . . . What I suppose we all want to do is to give them as early as possible such local Government as can safely be allowed to them. . . . The Boers seem to have fought with the greatest courage and determination, and I do not gather that they have lost their power as marksmen. Although we could not perhaps anticipate the magnitude which the business has assumed, yet we did know enough to justify all our caution and all our patience. I do not think that anything that can happen now will affect the determination of the people to go through with the business to the end. . . .

Chamberlain outlined his ideas in a memorandum submitted to the authorities in South Africa for consideration in January (Milner Papers, XLIV, i; XVII, ii). The general aims of British policy had been clearly defined by Lord Salisbury in the House of Lords. "With regard to the future," he had laid down, "there must be no doubt that the Sovereign Power of England is Paramount. There must be no doubt that the white races will be put upon

an equality, and that due precautions will be taken for the philanthropic and kindly and improving treatment of (the) countless indigenous races. . . . These must be insisted upon in the future. I hope they may be consistent with a very large autonomy on the part of that race which values its individual share in the Government so much as the Dutch do." . . .

Chamberlain's proposals followed in the main the lines indicated by this statement and by Lord Selborne's letter. He raised the question of an amnesty, but assumed that British subjects who had assisted the enemy would be dealt with according to their deserts. It would be reasonable that Natal, which had made the greatest sacrifices and sent to the front at least 5,000 troops out of her scanty population, should be rewarded by an addition to her territory. This might include a portion of the Transvaal up to the Vaal River, and of the Orange Free State, including Harrismith, and the Drakensberg, and, possibly, Swaziland. But the consideration must be kept in view that the British majority must not be compromised by the addition of territory comprising large numbers of Dutch inhabitants. Colonial opinion would probably be opposed to a suggestion which had been made for enlarging Basutoland at the expense of the Orange Free State. The idea of forming the two Republics into one Colony was rejected because a Dutch majority would predominate in such a unit, whereas in the Transvaal, if kept separate from the Orange Free State, where the inhabitants were chiefly Dutch, a large British majority was probable. If the northern part of the Cape Colony, which was chiefly inhabited by the Dutch, were added to the new Colony of the Orange Free State, a British majority would be assured at the Cape also, and in that case, when the time came for the Federation of the five Provinces of the Cape, Rhodesia, Natal, Transvaal, and Orange Free State, four out of the five would have a loyal British government.

For some time after the war, the two Republics would have to be governed under a Crown Colony or military system, but it would be the object of the British Government to transform this interim government as quickly as possible into a representative one. Remembering the lesson of the former annexation and revolt in 1881, Chamberlain was inclined to accompany a Proclamation of annexation with as full a statement as possible of the Government's intentions in this respect, so that the Boers might understand that it would depend entirely upon their peaceable behaviour how

soon they would have all the advantages already enjoyed by the Dutch in the two self-governing British Colonies. Certain conditions, however, must be imposed, for the sake of security and to prevent abuse by either race of the powers which its majority would confer upon it. Such conditions would comprise a considered scheme of representation; the enfranchisement of all British subjects without further naturalization; enfranchisement of natives qualified by education, as in the Cape Colony; provision to be made for erecting municipalities; the independence of the judiciary; control of the Imperial forces by the Crown; and security for an indemnity loan; the official language to be English, but both Dutch and English to be legalized in Parliament, the Courts, and the Schools; Customs, Postal and Railway unions to be arranged, preparatory to Federation, in consultation with the Representatives of the Cape, Natal, and Rhodesia. The control of all Colonial forces to be at the disposal of the General Officer commanding-in-chief in each Colony.

Hely-Hutchinson, in a lengthy memorandum (March 30), embodied the views of the Natal Ministers on these proposals. As to an amnesty, opinion in Natal was strongly opposed to a promise of lenient treatment for rebels. The time for leniency would be after prosecution for treason, and could take the form of fines and disfranchisement instead of the death penalty. Natal expected, but did not wish to demand, an increase of territory; a rectification of the boundary was long overdue.[1] Whilst concurring with most of the other points, the Governor observed that enfranchisement of natives was a subject which required to be approached with great caution, for opinion in Natal was strongly opposed to the "blanket vote" and the privileges extended to natives in the Cape Colony. He did not think that South African politicians would ever be willing that the Colonial forces should be placed under the control of the Imperial authority, except in case of actual war, without right of interference on the part of the Ministry. Opinion in Natal was not in favour of postponing Federation, but desired it to be made one of the elements of the

[1] Sir Walter himself inclined to the idea of including both the Transvaal and the Orange Free State in Natal, whilst Sir Harry Escombe, just before his death, suggested (Nov. 15) that the whole of the Transvaal should be joined with Natal, and the Free State with the Cape Colony. He thought that this arrangement would secure a blending of the Dutch and British races, who would finally unite with Rhodesia in the common ideal of a federal union.

settlement, as soon as the Crown Colony stage was passed. Dissent was expressed on the language question. If both Dutch and English were legalized in the Courts, a knowledge of both languages would be required in the Judges and the legal profession, and the field of selection would thus be seriously limited. The use of Dutch might be allowed in the Lower Courts for a limited number of years. But in the schools the English language ought to be the medium of instruction, except in districts where the Dutch were in a majority. The Prime Minister (Sir Albert Hime) and the Attorney-General (Mr. Henry Bale) were in general agreement on this point, the latter, who had been Minister of Education, giving his opinion that the placing of the Dutch language on terms of equality with the English would tend to maintain racial animosity, and that in practice, in the Natalian schools, English was generally preferred by the Dutch children (Milner Papers, XLIV, i, 1, and XVII, ii).

In forwarding these views to the Secretary of State in November, 1900, Sir Alfred enclosed a letter in which he expressed his agreement with them, and a change from his former opinion (Cd. 1163).

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson.

17/11/00. . . . I agree. There was a time when I leaned to greater equality of language, but when I see how Dutch is being worked in this Colony *purely as a political engine*, and how openly the rebel party declares its intention of playing the same game in the Republics, I feel that it is useless to give Dutch a position which will only be abused. What weighs with me greatly is the *gross inequality*, which I see daily illustrated at the Cape, of requiring all persons desiring to enter the public service to be able to speak and write both languages. To teach a Dutch child English is to teach him something of the greatest possible value to him, and *which he would have to learn in any case* if he wanted to get on in life in any other line except the most backward forms of agriculture. To teach an English child High Dutch is pure waste of time. It is a very difficult language, which is absolutely useless to him except for its artificial use in official business, into which it has been introduced with a political object—the promotion of Africanderdom. For ordinary life and intercourse with the common people it is no good at all, as the " taal " [1] is really almost a different language, and you might as well compel people to learn Chaucer in order to carry on business at the East End. High Dutch is simply kept up

[1] Cape Dutch *patois*, O.E.D.

in opposition to English, and the only object of making Englishmen learn it is to make them pass under the Africander yoke. My policy would be to make English indispensable in the future, and to prepare the rising generation for that state of affairs by practically compelling them to learn it, but to *admit Dutch* until the Anglicizing process is consummated, in order to meet the necessities of the existing non-English speaking Boers, and to prevent them feeling themselves prejudiced by being unable to express their wants or assert their rights in the only language they know.

The High Commissioner, in a despatch dated April 4, 1900, gave his " uncrystallized " opinions on the points raised by Chamberlain, following the lines of his letters to Selborne and Fitzpatrick. He agreed with the idea of an enlarged Natal, and of leaving Basutoland as it was. Federation must follow, not accompany the grant of self-government, to the annexed Republics. He concluded with the suggestion that the necessity for policing the conquered districts should be utilized for introducing " a new, thoroughly British and loyal element " of Reservists and Colonial settlers (Milner Papers, XXIII, iii, 85).

The stress and anxiety laid upon the High Commissioner by these events were relieved to some extent by the tenor of many letters from home. Intimate friends like Philip Lyttelton Gell and Sir Henry Birchenough and Earl Grey assured him of the stiffening of public opinion under the stimulus of disaster, of the growing admiration of and confidence in himself, as the true nature of the situation he had revealed was demonstrated, and of the discomfiture of the champions of a " harmless peasantry." Many public men wrote to express their sympathy with him in the burden of anxiety and tremendous responsibilities he was bearing in isolation.

The news of Colenso had caused a momentary panic, followed by an outburst of indignation at the incompetence of the Generals and the apparent failure of the War Office to rise to the occasion. " An army of lions led by donkeys," exclaimed men who remembered the Russian gibe in the Crimean War.

Extract from Letter. Miss Bertha Synge to Sir A. Milner.

3/11/99. . . . Our days are spent with reading our papers—ever clamouring for more, our nights in dreaming of all that is and is to be. In my lifetime, this state of tension is unique. The war affects all, rich and poor alike. All have friends and relations in it and it is no exaggeration to say we are all plunged in gloom. . . . I shall never forget last Tuesday in London, when the news

of the missing battalions arrived about midday. Picture the newsboys at the corners (I was going to the London Library) shouting "Terrible Reverse of British Troops—Loss of 2,000." Imagine the rush for papers as we all stood about the streets—regardless of all appearances, reading the telegrams with breathless anxiety. Carriages stopped at the corners for papers to be bought—bus conductors rushed with handsful of pennies as deputation for their passengers. There was a perfect sea of newspapers and anxious faces behind—intense gravity prevailed. . . . People walked along speaking in whispers and muttering, while ever echoed round the shrill and awful cry of "Terrible Reverse of British Troops." . . . The War Office is besieged—no one goes to the theatres—concert rooms are empty—new books fall flat—nothing is spoken of save the War. . . .

Extract from Letter. Philip Lyttelton Gell to Sir A. Milner.

2/12/99. . . . By the way, have you heard the German Emperor's opinion? (told to Balfour, I believe). He said German strategists held that our policy in Natal *was* to push forward at the outset at least as far as Dundee, but to have reckoned deliberately upon *repeated retirements by small stages*—so as to force the Boers to attack—that neither Ladysmith nor Dundee ought to have been filled with stores but that we should have prepared a succession of positions to retire upon by *short* stages until we got behind the Tugela. . . .

On the eve of the battle of Colenso, Mr. Balfour informed Sir Percy Fitzpatrick that the Kaiser, in his letter to Queen Victoria, pointed out that Buller, by attacking in Natal, was only running his head against the battlements of the mountain ranges and playing the game of the enemy. The plan worked out by the German staff was for an advance on the plateau along the railway to Kimberley and so into the plains of the Free State and the Transvaal—the plan, Mr. Balfour then added, which Lord Roberts had always favoured. Later, in the famous *Daily Telegraph* interview, the Kaiser claimed to be the author of Roberts's plan of campaign.[1]

Extract from Letter. Lord Selborne to Sir A. Milner.

26/12/99. [SECRET.] . . . I sent you a wire after the record week of three defeats just to show you that we were all full of go. It is horribly unpleasant, and, if Ladysmith fell, I don't think I should ever in my heart of hearts quite get over it. . . . I think we were getting a bit too self-exalted and self-reliant, and therefore

[1] Sir P. Fitzpatrick, "South African Memories," p. 118.

I believe that this temporary anxiety and humiliation is a merciful discipline which will do us a great deal of good in the long run. By the mercy of God the victorious end is as certain as that the sun will rise to-morrow, complete, absolute and overwhelming victory. Do not doubt that we mean to see this thing through without hesitation, deviation, or misgiving. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mrs. Montefiore.

13/12/99. . . . I was going in any case to send you a hurried line to-day to wish you all good things for the New Year. The old one threatens to close in gloom for S. Africa and the Empire, and the anxieties we are passing through are such as come rarely to any man even once in a lifetime. But I am doing all I can to take the most hopeful view of the future, of which circumstances permit. And I cannot believe that Fortune will always be so determinedly against us as has hitherto been the case. I want to thank you, not with many words, for your continued and magnificent generosity to me, which I did not in the least expect (but your kindness, used as I am to it, always exceeds one's imagination).[1] . . . Here we are all well—fearfully overworked and very sad, as day after day brings its tale of loss and disaster, often, one cannot help feeling, quite needless. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Lyttelton Gell to Sir A. Milner.

29/12/99. . . . The revolt against the arrogance and self-sufficiency of Military red tape has assumed tremendous proportions. . . . Meanwhile the spirit of the Country is *epoch-making*. There is not a waver as regards the Policy or the War. . . . The Nation has got hold of the root of the matter. You are " the man who has saved the situation." Even jealous Tories say in despair, " We want Chamberlain or Milner at the War Office." (*MS. note by Sir Alfred*, " God forbid ! ") . . . I was assured yesterday by one of Wolseley's men that *no transport could be obtained in Cape Colony*. As a matter of fact, we[2] had obtained last week an offer from Julius Weil of 2,000 horses and as many mules. We had at once informed the War Office—to no purpose. Then we reported to

[1] Mrs. Montefiore was the mother of Milner's old Balliol friend, Leonard Montefiore, who died in 1879, and the sketch of whose life was one of his earliest literary productions (*v.* Vol. I, p. 11). In view of the large calls upon Sir Alfred's private resources by the war funds, Refugee funds, and the greatly increased hospitality at Government House, involved by the influx of soldiers and others, Mrs. Montefiore at this time presented him with a sum which she had always intended to leave to him as a legacy.

[2] British South African Co.

is the one never to forget when fighting Boers. I know that you don't agree with me, and think that active campaigning in the Colony would be a solution for all your troubles. I believe myself that Methuen, hopelessly stuck, though you say he is, at Modder River, is more value there than he would be attacking Burghersdorp ; and that we do better in Barkly East by leaving it alone than we should if we sent an expedition into it. For the same reason I think French is really doing thing [1] very effective and all I regret is that I made him strong enough to risk that attack with the Suffolks the other day. I got the Boer estimate of the forces they are to put in the field the other day. It was

Transvaal	85,000	I think	they got	85,000
O.F. State . . .	25,000	,,	,, ,,	20,000
Natal	5,000	,,	,, ,,	5,000
Cape Colony . . .	30,000	,,	,, ,,	10,000
	145,000			120,000

So far as I can make out they have 46,000 men in and round Natal, say 40,000 effectives and 6,000 on temporary leave as 1 man in 11 is always away for 14 days. To get Cape Town quiet we want a definite success either at Kimberley or Ladysmith. At Kimberley we ought to get it, Ladysmith I am more doubtful about. I am just starting to try it is a risky operation. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir A. Milner.

1/1/00. . . . The situation still drags on and we naturally continue to be very anxious. The temper of the people is admirable. I always had absolute confidence in them, but they have exceeded my expectations. . . . I do not like even to appear to criticize those on the spot, but there is much in the military strategy which I do not understand. It seems to me that, so far as previous information went, we have nothing to complain of. We knew the number of men the Boers could put in the field, and I personally believe that the actual numbers are much less than has been reported, and that we have always been faced by inferior forces, although the advantages of position have been entirely against us. We knew also every gun and its capacity, and although complaints are made of inferiority of our artillery, it does not seem to me that they are justified, although we cannot expect that field artillery will be a match for guns of position. . . . Nobody, however, seems beforehand to have thought that the Boers would place all their men in the field. I certainly expected that they would keep back large

[1] French was at Colesberg. The sense seems to require "nothing."

numbers to guard against the Basutos, and to protect their own farms against their own natives. Their mobility has also been apparently underestimated. It makes one Boer worth three or four English. No one suggested at the outset of the war that this would require such immense preponderance of force on our side if we were to hold our own. No one, either military or civilian, ever suggested to me that more than one army corps would be required. It now appears that two or even three, will be necessary. . . . The Press . . . is hunting for a scapegoat . . . and I suppose that the War Office will have to bear the brunt of the attack. This seems to me unfair. The War Office has done what it has never before done in the history of this country, and has placed an enormous force safely at the seat of war six thousand miles from the base. It is not in the power of any War Office to create Heaven-born geniuses in the way of Generals and Commanders, and if we have made mistakes it is rather the fault of individuals than of the institution. I am not even certain that we have made mistakes except in the sense in which every General must occasionally underestimate his enemy or miss his opportunities. If we go back to the history of, say the Peninsular War, and still more of the Crimea and the Mutiny, we should see that Wellington, and those who followed him, made infinitely worse mistakes than any we have had to chronicle up to the present time. The loss of life was then tremendous. Take Talavera, for instance, when after a bloody battle, called a victory, Wellington had to retreat leaving 1,500 wounded behind him in the town of Talavera. I am not therefore inclined to exaggerate our reverses, or to doubt that we shall learn by experience, but meanwhile you and I have an anxious time to go through. One question is constantly presenting itself to my mind. The Boers establish themselves in an advantageous situation and entrench themselves so that we cannot take their position without a frontal attack and heavy loss. Acting on these tactics they have somehow or another succeeded in blocking us at Ladysmith, Mafeking, Kimberley, Modder River, Colenso, and perhaps in the case of Gatacre and French also. How can they do this with inferior numbers? Why, if the relief of these places was not a matter of absolute necessity within a limited space of a few days, could not we adopt their tactics and blockade *them*—that is to say, starve them out and cut their communications so that sooner or later they would be obliged to leave their strong positions and we could either follow them or pass by them to the places we wished to relieve? At the present time I do not believe they have more than 50,000 men at the outside. We have, with the Colonial forces, something like 90,000. How is it that 50,000 men can everywhere blockade 90,000? Of course before now you have been fully authorized to

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enlist every man in the Colony who can be usefully employed. All considerations of a financial character must give way to the urgency of the situation. You have also had authority to proclaim martial law and to deal with the Cape Ministry, if it becomes in your opinion absolutely necessary, although I retain my belief in the policy which you have hitherto adopted, and think it will be much better, if possible, to go on with the present Ministry than to provoke further demonstrations of disloyalty by absolutely breaking with them. . . .

Oppressed by his exaggerated idea of the enemy's strength, Buller began his attempt to shift the Boers from their entrenchments on the Brakfontein heights. The Boers were weak, and after severe fighting on Spion Kop Ridge, and the turning of their left by the storming of the twin Peaks, they were beginning to retreat. Watching from Cæsar's Camp, the beleaguered garrison of Ladysmith saw the Boers beginning to trek away, as at Majuba. Instead of pressing the attack, Buller then suddenly abandoned the whole enterprise (Jan. 24).

Extract from Letter. Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson to Sir A. Milner.

11/3/00. . . . There seems no doubt that we won the battle of Spion Kop. . . . The Boers actually trekked away, and only came back when they saw we had evacuated the hill. . . .[1]

After another failure at Vaal Kranz, Buller announced that he despaired of reaching Ladysmith, and that it must fall in a few days. Roberts thought it best to order him to remain on the defensive until "we see the result of my operations in the Orange Free State."[2] His original plan had been to advance upon Bloemfontein along the Orange River by way of Springfontein Junction, but he had changed his mind. His decision was dictated by the political importance of relieving Kimberley, and thereby Mafeking, combined with the prospect of engaging Cronje on the Modder River, before he could be reinforced. He therefore decided to advance by way of Kimberley, the relief of which would, he conceived, relax the pressure upon Ladysmith and Natal.[3] A new spirit had been breathed into the conduct of affairs by the enormous energy

[1] Cf. the vivid account from the Boer side by Colonel Deneys Reitz, "Commando," Ch. IX.

[2] General Sir N. Lyttelton, "Eighty Years," pp. 213–18; Lord Roberts to Lord Lansdowne, January 29, February 8 and 22; Lord Newton, "Life of Lord Lansdowne," p. 170.

[3] Lord Roberts's Evidence, South African War Commission.

and resourceful foresight of his Chief of Staff. A Colonial Mounted Division under Brabant was rapidly formed, whilst Kitchener organized transport and stores for the daring trek across the veldt which Roberts's plan involved. The Army was rendered mobile and independent of the railway, which Cronje flattered himself it could never leave. On February 8 the great march on Bloemfontein began. Roberts went to Modder River and sent General French forward with the cavalry to work round Cronje's left flank.

On February 15, French rode straight through the centre of the Boer lines, and completed his famous " ride " into Kimberley the same night. Cronje at once began to retire from Magersfontein upon Bloemfontein, but was caught, pinned, and forced to unconditional surrender by Kitchener, Roberts and French at Paardeberg Drift, on February 27, the anniversary of Majuba. Roberts pressed boldly on to Bloemfontein, which he occupied, after a severe march, on March 13. On the way, the Boers had been defeated at Poplar Grove, March 7.

When Milner had ridden over the route after the war, he wrote to a friend :

" 12/12/02. . . . It must have been an awful march, with little food (you remember the ' incident ' of the captured convoy at very first starting), little water, a blazing sun, dying horses and a series of hot fights. It was wonderful how men and officers got through it, and certainly the little man must have had an iron will, as well as a clear insight to push along as resolutely as he did. It was the only *Strategy* of the war."

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Rendel.

7/2/00. Just a line to tell you I am still alive and fighting. I think I should have won, in fact I think I have won, the political fight, though, of course, if the Generals can't win a battle between them, I shall be buried under their failure. That is inevitable in all statesmanship, and I shall not complain. . . . I am extraordinarily touched by the absolute and unwavering loyalty *to me personally* of the South African British. I expected that long before now there would have been some murmuring against so unsuccessful a champion. Not a bit of it. I have not heard a single growl, yet thousands are suffering heavily, from loss of their business, loss of their farms, to say nothing of many who have fallen on the battle-field—not a few needlessly, good lives thrown away by idiotic leadership. It is something to feel that one has not misjudged them. There are a large section in England, who apparently never think

of the South African British, loyal and devoted as they are, or talk of them as if they were all *Jew Capitalists*,—the most absurd and inveterate fiction of all those obscuring this unlucky controversy. These people are so busy " conciliating " the Dutch, who never have loved us, and now are—90 per cent. of them—rebels, either active or patient [*sic.*? *potential*], that they quite forget the men of their own race. To sacrifice your friends in the idle hope of winning over your enemies has never seemed to me the height of statesmanship. Yet it has an irresistible attraction for some minds. . . .

Extract from Letter. The Earl of Minto, Governor-General of Canada, to Sir A. Milner.

6/4/00. . . . I only write you a few lines to thank you sincerely for your kind letter to me of Feb. 27, as to the doings of our Canadians. Of course we are all very proud of them. And your friend Dr. Parkin, who has been staying with us, advised me to publish your letter, which I took the liberty of doing. . . .

After entering Bloemfontein, Roberts issued a Proclamation offering safe conduct to their farms to all Free State burghers who had not taken a prominent part in the war, and who would now lay down their arms and swear to take no further part in the war (Cd. 261, p. 61). This Proclamation had been prepared in consultation with the High Commissioner.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Field Marshal Lord Roberts.

21/1/00. . . . I have only two suggestions to make with regard to it (*the Proclamation*). (1) I think it would be politically useful to have a little more preamble. The Dutch are influenced by that kind of thing. Like all uneducated people, they do not understand a purely businesslike statement and *almost expect* a little bunkum. Moreover there is a likelihood that some of the Free State people may break away from the President, being angry with him for having got them into this mess. Therefore I want to make a distinction between the Government and the people, and to throw all the blame on the former, which indeed deserves it. (2) I do not like the promise of protection being confined to those " who have not taken up arms against us." As a matter of fact they have all done so. . . . Hitherto they have had no option. There is a compulsory law : every burgher must fight. But once we occupy the country, those who never wanted to fight, or are sick of it, will have an excuse for laying down their arms and will be tempted to avail themselves of that excuse by the promise of protection. I enclose, for your consideration, and only to illustrate my meaning,

a draft of a paragraph, which might be substituted for the first part of your draft. . . .

Extract from Telegram. Resident Commissioner, Basutoland (Sir Godfrey Lagden), to Sir A. Milner.

25/3/00. The Paramount Chief with his sons and other chiefs have been here for the last few days. Lerothodi requests respectfully to be allowed to express to you, and to ask you to forward his thankfulness and congratulations for the victories gained by H.M. Government over the Queen's enemies ; to reiterate his expression of loyalty on behalf of himself and people. I beg your Excellency will be pleased to accept the message which was announced in public and cordially greeted.

Extract from Telegram. Sir A. Milner to the Resident Commissioner, Basutoland.

25/3/00. Please inform the Paramount Chief that I have pleasure in receiving and in forwarding for submission to Her Majesty the expression of his thankfulness and congratulations for the victories gained by H.M. troops, and I take this opportunity of expressing my approbation of the loyalty shown by the Paramount Chief and the great bulk of the Basutos during the trying period they have just passed through. . . .

Extract from Telegram. Sir A. Milner to Lord Roberts.

18/3/00. Following telegram received, dated 16th March. *Begins :* Please convey on behalf of the coloured loyalists our congratulations to Lord Roberts and troops on entering Bloemfontein. John Kleintzes of Robertson, Cape Colony.

All this time the state of affairs in the Cape Colony was causing the High Commissioner the gravest anxiety. The rebellion which had broken out in the north-eastern district in November was only kept in check by General French's operations about Colesberg. On Roberts's arrival Sir Alfred had expressed dissent from Methuen's advocacy of a direct advance upon Kimberley ; he had represented the unwisdom of denuding the Colony of troops ; and when Roberts left for the front, he was obliged to ask him to spare men for the north-west and west of the main line of railway. For, as Sir Alfred had foreseen, Roberts's entry into the Orange Free State was answered by an outbreak of rebellion in the north-western part of the Cape Colony. On the 15th of February 600 rebels and Boers crossed the Orange River and occupied Prieska. A commando was collected, and the district proclaimed Free State terri-

tory. To the threat to the great railway junction of De Aar, through which all supplies for the main British army must pass, was added the peril of the rebellion spreading, if unchecked. Sir Alfred impressed upon Roberts the vital necessity for checking it.

Roberts had kept steadily in view the paramount importance of concentrating all his available striking force on his main objective.

He had judged that he could not spare the troops which Sir Alfred urged should be left to guard the Colony and prevent rebellion. Like the great leader he was, he decided upon the bold course of immediate advance, risking the danger of a rising in his rear. But in the despatch in which he explained his decision, he hardly did justice to the precise point of the High Commissioner's memorandum (p. 65). Sir Alfred's suggestion was that a small mobile force should be concentrated permanently in the Colony, which would check at the outset any outbreak of rebellion, and at the same time release a large number of the troops detailed for guarding the railways. After the occupation of Prieska, Roberts did all he could to help the High Commissioner in crushing the rebellion which he had foretold.[1]

Kitchener was sent down to De Aar and arranged for three columns under General Settle, Colonel (Major-General Sir John) Adye, and Colonel Sir Charles Parsons to clear the district. Colonel Adye's column met with a severe reverse on March 7, and fell back upon Britstown. Roberts then again sent Kitchener to De Aar, directly after his successful action at Poplar Grove. Kitchener, adhering to General Settle's plan, converged the three columns on Prieska and chased Liebenberg and Sheenekamp out of the Colony (March 21). The rebellion in this part was scotched, and whilst many of the Boers and rebels escaped across the river, the War Committee and ringleaders were arrested and kept in custody, and minor offenders were bound over. They had had a sharp lesson, which they did not forget when De Wet raided the Colony next year.

In the following letters, which comprise a very accurate forecast of the events just narrated, Sir Alfred made plain his reasons for pressing Roberts to leave sufficient forces behind him in the Cape Colony. He also replied to the charge that " political advisers " had been responsible for military errors in the disposition of forces. By a curious piece of irony, Buller's sudden decision to remove his

[1] Lord Newton, " Life of Lord Lansdowne " ; Lord Roberts to Lord Lansdowne, February 22, p. 174 ; Lord Roberts's Evidence, South African War Commission.

base from the Cape to Natal, which, as has been said, was made without Sir Alfred's knowledge and contrary to his judgment, had appeared so strange and inexplicable, that some people had jumped to the conclusion that he was acting under pressure from the High Commissioner (Milner Papers, XVII, iii, 409).

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

17/1/00. [VERY CONFIDENTIAL] Things are rather on the mend in this Colony and unless we have some hideous disaster in Natal, I look forward to a turn in the tide shortly. We are all very anxious about this relief of Ladysmith. More and more, as the war goes on, one sees the fatal consequences of the big original blunder of holding on to Ladysmith, when it was evident that it would be invested, and thus necessitating the diversion of an enormous force to its relief. We may not relieve it, and meanwhile we are crippled everywhere else. Subject, as I say, to the effect of events in Natal upon us, we are doing better here. In the first place there is for the first time since trouble began a vigorous control of matters military,—some sort of idea what we are driving at and a will behind it. With the brief interval of Buller's stay in Cape Town during which there was some direction, though it was not perhaps always wise, there has been no head here in matters military. None of the experts had even thought out the problem as a whole, or if there was such a man, he had no influence in the direction of military affairs. Well, we are learning by experience. The soldiers have always fought well. During the last few weeks some of their leading men have not been leading foolishly. If we can only avoid fresh disasters, the strain must tell on the enemy in time. And in a little time too (but time is necessary), I believe the new Generals will introduce order into what is at present most at sixes and sevens in our military organization. I only hope the Home Government will give them all they ask for. So, for the moment, I am relieved of the futile and perhaps dangerous effort to do other people's work, and am not perpetually shouting at the soldiers (to their natural annoyance) to look out for this, that or the other thing, which one would have imagined they could see for themselves. And so my mind is turning once more to my own proper business. Assuming that, after all disasters, we are yet going ultimately to win, I foresee considerable danger of that befalling us, which befell Russia in 1877/78 and Japan, after her conquest of China, viz. : the Powers which remained neutral while the conquest was undecided, stepping in, as soon as victory had declared itself, and depriving the victor of the fruit of his success. It is alarming to observe the intensity of and permanence of the interest which foreign powers take in the

Transvaal, and the increasing hold which foreigners are getting upon the country. The [S.A.R.] Government apparently is going to play up to this. It is indeed the only chance.

I assume that the ground of any ultimate foreign intervention will be that the interests of foreigners in the Transvaal are so enormous. The policy of the S.A.R. Government as I read it is to increase that interest by the virtual confiscation of properties held by Englishmen. The method is to impose an impossible tax, confiscate the property for non-payment of such tax, or of some existing rent or licence which the expelled owner, in consequence of his absence, cannot pay, or cannot pay in proper form, then sell the property to some friend of the Government, Boer, foreigner or renegade Englishman. The effect is twofold. The loyal British are punished, and the non-British interest in the country is increased. I have for some time been anxious that we should make some clear announcement, whether by a H.C.'s Proclamation, or by some other public notice or statement binding the British Government, that we intended at the close of the war to uphold the private rights existing at the time of its outbreak, and to treat confiscations effected during the course of it as null and void. This is only just to British property holders. If we were justified in claiming political rights for the British in the Transvaal, we are *a fortiori* justified in protecting their private property. And at the same time we should appear as the defenders of legitimate foreign interests, thus giving us a strong right to say "hands off" to foreign Governments. If we are prepared to look after the interests of their subjects, they have less ground to interfere. Finally, such a declaration would only be fair to intending purchasers of confiscated properties. We must refuse to recognize them if we win. It would be out of the question to spend thousands of lives and millions of money in order to conquer the S.A.R., only in order to govern a country in which vast properties had been transferred from legitimate British holders to penniless Boers or foreign speculators, and to defend these usurpers in the wealth acquired by them for a song through siding with our enemies. But if we must refuse to recognize them, we should surely be in a better position if we had notified our intention to uphold existing rights, whether British, Boer or foreign, from the first. . . . I earnestly commend this question to your consideration. It seems to me to be one of great future importance.

There is another matter which causes me constant anxiety. What is to be done about the constitution of the Cape Colony when the war is over? We cannot go back to the old system of allowing the country to be governed by rebels under constitutional forms. What the Bond is must now be evident to the crassest. In all the revolted districts leading Bondsmen, including in many cases (not

in all) the local members, have been foremost in rebellion. Throughout the country the vast majority of the Dutch population —that portion which adheres to the Bond and returns the members who form the majority of the House—have given the enemy the strongest, most unfaltering, moral support. To join them where they appeared, to sympathize with and succour them where they did not, has been their universal policy. The leading Bond organ [1] has worked ceaselessly, most energetically, and very cunningly to keep sedition at boiling-point. It is out of the question that, whatever may be done about the unrevolted parts of the country, the people of districts which have revolted almost *en masse*, like Aliwal and Albert, should be allowed as soon as they have done shooting at the Imperial forces, to turn quietly round and resume the game of disloyalty by the old constitutional means. I can see that Ministers and their friends calmly assume that this is what is going to happen. . . . I own that I am appalled to find how widely the influence of a Bond Ministry, following, of course, many Ministries which have been more or less under Bond influence, has sapped the loyalty of the Civil Service. The railway and P.O. officials and the bulk of the officials at headquarters have behaved well, many of them even splendidly. But the provincial magistrates and their staffs, including some of the police, have shown remarkable weakness, if not positive disloyalty. If, when our troops have withdrawn, the Government remains in the old hands, the Colony will be part of the British Empire only in name. On the other hand if a loyal Government can be secured for only a few years, the position will, I believe, be saved for ever. The Bond unsupported from outside would die a natural death in the Colony, unless it could artificially strengthen itself by the possession of power and patronage. It is only the Imperial Parliament which can deal with this situation. No local Parliament elected by the present constituencies including rebels would support a loyal Ministry.

If, on the other hand, the districts which have gone into rebellion were temporarily deprived of their constitutional rights—as far as representation was concerned—I think we should be sure of a loyal majority in the remainder of the country, which would tide us over the time of danger. . . . The method of suspending or modifying the Constitution is a matter for Crown lawyers to decide.

I am all for a policy of conciliation when war is over, for letting bygones be bygones, for treating Dutch like British, forgetting [*sic.* ? *but not for setting*] that 9/10th population to whom the existing constitution is already unfair under the heel of absolute rebels,

[1] *Ons Land.*

who have only just been in arms against us. There must be at least an interval during which the latter may purge their treason by a suspension of their political power.

The Home Government, however, accepted the objections formulated by Chamberlain. They were averse from adopting either of the alternatives here suggested by Sir Alfred—of placing the whole Colony under Crown Colony Government for a year or two, or of disenfranchising the revolted districts and holding a new election for the rest of the country. The first course was held to be a measure too strong for the existing situation. The second course would provoke opposition both at home and in the Colony from many who, whilst in favour of the war, would object to any arbitrary interference with the Constitution of a self-governing Colony, thus possibly defeating its own ends (Milner Papers, XLIV, i, 23).

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir A. Milner.

20/1/00. [PRIVATE] . . . I need hardly say that I most heartily sympathize with you in the strain, physical and mental, which is put upon you, and that I have always been anxious to give you any assistance that you might ask for. Hitherto, I gather, that you have felt that the kind of assistance we could send would not relieve your personal work, but I have now secured the assent of the Treasury and before this reaches you you will be aware that we have retained the services of a constitutional lawyer who will, I think, be entirely trustworthy, and able, I hope, somewhat to lessen the weight of the burden which is on your shoulders. . . . I am anxious to warn you as to your relations with the military authorities. I daresay it is not necessary, but I find a disposition on the part of some of the critics here to throw the responsibility for the division of the forces on what they call the " political advisers." I have protested against this, and have explained that in my view it is the duty of the Governors of the Cape and Natal to inform the military authorities of the political situation, but that the entire responsibility for military operations rests with the latter, and they must disregard the political question if the exigencies of the military situation require it. I do not want them to say that they were pressed to take a particular course which their own judgment rejected. The question has arisen in regard to the retention of Glencoe and Ladysmith, but it may arise in other forms if we are not careful. Your letter shows me that you are fully alive to these considerations, but for greater precaution I refer to the question again. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

21/2/00. . . . Your warning . . . is certainly not superfluous. I can see by the way in which Hutchinson has been dealt with for doing no more than his duty in pointing out the political effect of certain military movements or projected movements, how ready the *haute armée* is to throw the blame of its own colossal ineptitudes on other people. I have, however, been more fortunate so far than Hutchinson, inasmuch as on any important occasion, when I have advised the military (always after careful provisos that I was merely giving information and suggestions, and not attempting otherwise to influence a decision, for which the responsibility was exclusively theirs), my advice has *invariably been disregarded.* I have never grumbled at that. As long as I am " heard " in a case, in which I am so deeply interested, I am quite prepared to be overruled.

I was opposed to the division of the Army Corps, in order to relieve Ladysmith. I was opposed to General Buller going to Natal. I am opposed to the policy of swelling the enormous force in the Free State by leaving the Colesberg–Naauwpoort line dangerously weak and Prieska altogether unguarded. In all these cases I temperately expressed my dissent from the course being adopted, and, having done that, I can only hope that I may prove to be as wrong in the last case as I was unfortunately right in the two former. But, whether right or wrong, I have been overruled, and, as far as any credit or any blame for the result goes, I am completely out of it.

The internal constitutional questions now arising, and which I am sorry to say H.M. Government must look in the face, are perplexing to a degree. It is impossible for any man to solve them by constitutional means, though I think expert advice may help me to play with them a little longer and not to prejudice the ultimate settlement, which can only be made by the assertion of supreme authority on the part of the Imperial Government overriding the local constitution. Perhaps the most embarrassing of these questions at the present moment are those arising out of the Proclamation of martial law. It is quite impossible to carry on any war, and especially a war complicated by rebellion, without some interference with the rights of the subject, which English law so jealously safeguards. Other countries have war laws such as that of the S.A.R., and O.F.S., i.e. proper legal provisions for the exceptional circumstances of a state of war. We have only " martial law " which admittedly is no law at all, but the temporary suspension of law —a purely arbitrary and singularly ill-defined condition. Of course, if it had been possible, it would have been preferable, not to proclaim martial law, but to pass—as has often been done in Ireland and

would under similar circumstances be done in Great Britain—a statute giving the Executive special temporary powers to deal with a temporary emergency. But this being impossible in the present case (1) because Parliament could not be summoned, and (2) because if summoned the majority, being strongly in sympathy with the enemy, would have refused any powers calculated to facilitate the conduct of the war or to suppress a rebellion conducted by their own supporters, we have had to fall back on the clumsy expedient of "martial law." The consequence is a condition of great administrative and judicial confusion, heightened by the constant passive obstruction of Ministers to the system, the establishment of which they have been compelled to allow; by the conflicting views as to the nature of martial law on our side; and by the natural and pardonable blunders of military officers in exercising unfamiliar powers in a country, of the idiosyncrasies of which they were mostly ignorant. On the whole, I think we may congratulate ourselves that in the resulting chaos nothing very bad has happened. The credit for this is chiefly due to the patient and conciliatory temper, and a great deal of tact shown by both General Buller and Lord Roberts. But while nothing very bad has happened, minor difficulties, bungles and annoyances are incessant, and I shall be very grateful for the extra help of a skilled lawyer in dealing with them.

But the difficulties arising under martial law are only a small instalment of what we have in front of us, assuming as I do, that sooner or later the Queen's authority is re-established in the Cape Colony. That is why I venture to press upon you, even at this apparently premature moment, the question, what is to be done here when the war is over. The number of problems resulting from the struggle would be serious even with a loyal government in power, as in Natal. With a government which, whatever the feelings of some of its members, is collectively under the influence of the Bond, it will be impossible to get on at all. Moreover, I am perfectly satisfied that even if the whole of Great Britain were to rise up and bid them let bygones be bygones, the loyalists of this Colony, many of whom are now in arms, would simply refuse to be governed by a majority, at least a quarter of whom represented actual rebels, while some seven-eighths represented people whose sympathy with invasion and rebellion throughout the war had been notorious.

Two courses seem to me to be possible: (1) to deprive the rebel districts for a term of years of their parliamentary representation, or (2) to suspend the Constitution of the Colony as a whole. The latter is, I think, the more defensible in principle, but the former would be better in practice. For it would not throw the burden of adjusting the claims rising out of the present disorders and rendering the recurrence of such disorders impossible wholly on the

Imperial Government. The loyal Colonists, who would be in a great majority in the unrevolted districts, would see to that for themselves, and the Imperial Government would have the easier and less invidious rôle of guiding a sympathetic local administration and restraining if necessary any excess of zeal on their part, in the interests of the vanquished. All this sounds very much like counting the chickens before they are hatched, for it may be 6 months—it may be a year—before order is restored throughout the Colony. But this delay, should it occur, will not enable us entirely to escape facing the constitutional impasse. Are we not to summon Parliament to vote supplies for the next financial year, beginning 1st July? If we do not, the constitution is already broken. But if we do, what Parliament are we to summon? The present one? Then, assuming, as no doubt we may, that the members actually in revolt will not appear, what is to be done with the members, whose constituencies are in revolt? Are they to be allowed to help in voting down the loyalist minority? Whatever happens, it seems to me that the time is not far off when we must make up our minds what to do under these puzzling circumstances. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lord Selborne.

31/1/00. . . . You say in your last letter, for which many thanks, that we must not sacrifice strategy to political considerations. A victory in the field covers any number of political blunders. A thousand times I agree with you. . . . But there are political considerations which have a direct military value. For instance I have bothered, and shall continue to bother every General, to prevent at almost any cost, the further spread of invasion in the Colony. Why? Because the Colonial Boer is the enemy's *only Reserve*. They have got their last man and boy in the field. Let them once get into the *heart of* the Colony, even with a mere handful of men and a flag, and they tap that Reserve, and get certainly 10,000 and perhaps even 15–20,000 *excellent recruits*. Therefore I say, if, by detaching 1,000 men to guard, say, two points, at which such entry is still possible, you deprive your enemy of 10,000 at least, *that must be right in any strategy*. But that is not Politics, though it looks like it. It is Military Arithmetic.

What an awful show-up it has been! Granted we have all made mistakes, what would they really have mattered, but for that *avalanche of military incompetence*, which has nearly swept the Empire away? What is the disease really? Do you know? Splendid men, splendid officers—and so many things, mobilization, sea and railway transport, commissariat, *admirably done*. It is not as if the thing was altogether rotten. There is much that is excellent. But

the *central machinery* and the *chosen leaders*. . . . Was there ever such a series of mis-selection? The extraordinary thing is that for frank criticism of one another, I know no set of men equal to our *haute armée*. And yet, when it comes to business, there is the most ridiculous fetish-worship of seniority and positive pusillanimity about the removal of admitted failures. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

24/1/00. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . Hitherto the formula has held good: "the Dutch will not rise unless they see a commando; the moment they see a commando almost all of them will rise." The formula even stood the strain of the great week of reverses, after which I certainly expected that there would be a certain amount of open revolt, even when the enemy had not entered. As a matter of fact, though the attitude of the Dutch became, and has remained, more truculent, and menacing, there has been no open revolt anywhere,—much less a general revolt. . . . The critical time is still before us, and a pinch of sorts is bound to come, however the war goes. The one thing which cannot happen is a rapid collapse of the Boer power. The two possible alternatives are (i) further reverses, such as failure to relieve either Ladysmith or Kimberley, (ii) a gradual turn of the scale in our favour, commencing with an invasion in force of the O.F.S. In either case we shall have trouble with the Colonial Boers, in the former because they will be convinced that they have only to throw their weight into the scale in order to finally ruin us, in the latter for another reason, to which I particularly want to direct attention. The calculation of the Moderates among the potential rebels—those who have obeyed, without entirely sympathizing with Schreiner—has always been, that if the Colonial Dutch did not throw in their lot unreservedly with the enemy, they would be able to exercise very great influence on the settlement. The harder the struggle became for us, the stronger grew their conviction of the wisdom of this policy. Even many extremists have now rallied to it. The feeling is that the enemy may win without the Colonial Boers risking their skins. If so, *tant mieux*. If, on the other hand, the enemy begin to lose (it being assumed that the scale will only turn against them very slowly) then will be the time for their sympathizers in the Colony to come to their aid. The *modus operandi* will be a loud and general outcry for peace—peace at this stage necessarily meaning a compromise very unfavourable to Great Britain. And it will be backed by a threat, that, unless we make peace, the Dutch will rise throughout the Colony. The peace agitation is already afoot. Hints are already being conveyed to me (from Ministers and others) that the spectacle of the Republics

being slowly borne down by the weight of British power will be too much for the "loyalty" of the Colonial Boers. "It will be impossible to hold them." Now it is evident that peace with the power of the Republics unbroken would seal the fate of British power in South Africa. It would really be much better to be turned out neck and crop. Therefore, while blandly listening to such hints (and replying, if I do reply at all, with platitudes), I am doing all I can to prepare for the moment, when the "loyal" Dutch do hold the pistol to our heads in this fashion. It will certainly be extremely awkward if at the moment when we are beginning to make our way in the Free State, and the bulk of our fighting force is engaged there, the Dutch in the Colony jump upon us with a demand to "cease firing," or else prepare for a rebellion in our rear. It is for this reason that I attach so much importance to strengthening our position in the Colony. In my view there is only one way of meeting the demand that we should hold our hands the moment we begin to get the better of it, whenever it is seriously made, and that is by a point-blank refusal, backed, if necessary, by the appointment of a thoroughly British Ministry and a great extension of Martial law. It may be that, if we are seen to be prepared to defy Dutch pressure, no such measures will be necessary. My point is that we must be strong enough in the Colony to defy that, without weakening our fighting force at the front.

So far all is going well. We are greatly strengthening our hold upon the Colony by arming the loyalists and with the arrival of the Militia battalions, some of which will be available for the line of communication, we shall strengthen it still more. And I think it is all being done with as little disturbance of the Dutch mind, and indeed with as little appreciation on their part of what we are about, as was humanly possible. The difficulty, of course, is the enormous area which has to be more or less guarded. But, on the other hand, the would-be rebel population, except in a few places, which should be specially provided for, is very scattered, and not very well armed and not very daring. It ought to be possible so to distribute our forces as to deal any local rising a staggering blow, before the flame has had time to spread, and one such lesson might stop the whole thing. As far as possible, the stores of arms and ammunition in the hands of traders have been quietly removed from outlying districts, and where it is not safe to remove them, the Magistrates have orders to destroy them on any signs of danger. I do not think we shall have a repetition of the disgraceful fiasco of Barkly East. But, while I am hopeful of being able to deal with it, I am certain that a struggle with the Colonial Boers has got to come. It may be only a political struggle, that is, if we are strong enough and show our determination to use our strength, we shall have a

big bluff, and then collapse. But it may also be, that we shall not get through without some local fights in the Colony.

In any case I hope public opinion at home will not be deluded by the Peace agitation. No doubt some of the agitators will be honest. But the majority of these people don't want peace for its own sake. They want Dutch domination, and they will only raise the cry of peace to prevent our putting an end to it. Certainly the people at home are so far backing us magnificently. I hope and believe that the national spirit, which has so splendidly risen under misfortune, will last through to the end. You must be worked and wearied to death. I simply cannot get through my daily work, but by some unexplained miracle I keep, though fearfully tired, absolutely well. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

31/1/00. . . . As regards the military situation, a strange thing has befallen me. I was a croaker weeks ago, and for weeks, amidst a cheery and confident crowd. To-day I am an optimist among the croakers. Everything has gone far far worse than even I feared. But what nobody seems to me to consider *now* is *the strain upon the enemy*. They have had successes beyond any reasonable expectation, but they are no nearer the end of a war which is wearing them out. Undoubtedly they started with the conviction, that they had only to make a good beginning, and either we should get sick of it, as we did after Majuba, or Foreign Powers would intervene. They have made a good beginning with a vengeance, but no one has intervened and, after all our losses, the force opposed is still growing in numbers. . . . My only fear, militarily, is that the lesson which I believe has been thoroughly learned here, may not have been equally learned at home, and that the W.O. may still attempt to set up its own notions against those of men on the spot. The present Commander-in-Chief and his Chief of the Staff are not infallible. I differ (silently) from a good deal that they are doing. But they have put a new spirit into the whole campaign in this Colony. Their attitude to the problem is something quite different from what we have seen yet, and vastly more hopeful. Barring some great disaster in Natal (something much worse) we shall see a great change here. But two things are necessary, (i) patience, for we can only wear out the enemy, (ii) prompt compliance by the W.O. authorities with any requests of the General on the spot, whether for men or material, provided, of course, that compliance is not impossible. I hope Pall Mall will not think it knows better. . . . If military matters go well—indeed all the more if they go well—we are going to have political trouble in the Colony. Signs

multiply, that the Bond are going to make a determined move in the direction of peace. The renewed attacks on you and me in the rebel press, the Peace resolutions coming in from different quarters, and the summoning of the Bond Congress for next month, are all indicative of the fact that the Hofmeyr party think the time has come for rescuing their friends across the Border. They know probably (? better) than we do how severe the pressure on the Republics is, and their hope now as ever is in the gullibility of the British public. . . .

Despatch from Field Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War.

16/2/00. . . . Before quitting the seat of Government I received a memorandum from the High Commissioner, in which Sir Alfred Milner reviewed the political and military situation, and laid stress on the possibility of a general rising among the disaffected Dutch population, should the Cape Colony be denuded of troops for the purpose of carrying on offensive operations in the Orange Free State. In reply I expressed the opinion that the military requirements of the case demanded an early advance into the enemy's country ; that such an advance, if successful, would lessen the hostile pressure both on the northern frontiers of the Colony and in Natal ; that the relief of Kimberley had to be effected before the end of February, and would set free most of the troops encamped on the Modder River, and that the arrival of considerable reinforcements from home, especially of Field Artillery, by the 19th of February, would enable those points along the frontier which were weakly held to be materially strengthened. I trusted, therefore, that His Excellency's apprehensions would prove groundless. No doubt a certain amount of risk had to be run, but protracted inaction seemed to me to involve more serious dangers than the bolder course which I have decided to adopt.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

8/3/00. . . . The rebellion in the West has taken up all my days and (partly) nights. It is a most awkward business, and Head Quarters being 600 miles off, and having their hands quite full, and having taken not only all the men and all the transport, but all the brains and energy with them, it is extraordinarily difficult to get the military authorities to move. The disorganization is extraordinary, and I am not sure that we shall not get into a mess in consequence. I am not saying this in blame of anybody. From the beginning of this business the commanders have had the devil driving them. The imperious necessities of Kimberley and Ladysmith have caused everything to be done in a hurry and

everything to be sacrificed to the relieving columns. It is annoying to think that all this mess in the Colony might have been prevented by 500 men *permanently encamped* at Prieska, and that everybody knew this except the Military chiefs, whose eyes (naturally enough) were rigidly fixed on the main advance only. However, I suppose we shall " muddle out of it somehow." . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Roberts to Sir A. Milner.

17/3/00. . . . It is satisfactory to find that the occupation of Bloemfontein has had the effect I expected, that pressure has at once removed from Norval's Pont and Bethulie bridges, and that the whole of the Orange Free State to the south of this is rapidly settling down. The Proclamation published yesterday, copy of which I enclose, has already worked wonders. The burghers seem only to want an excuse to lay down their arms, and I expect to hear that the meeting of Council, which Mr. Steyn has summoned to be held at Kroonstad early in April, will be poorly attended. We shall be on the move ourselves about that time, and our being in the vicinity of Kroonstad may possibly have a disquieting effect on Mr. Steyn and his supporters. It is most unfortunate that he and Kruger were not captured at Poplar Grove on the 7th inst. They might have been, if our cavalry had been in their proper place. . . . I don't think you need be anxious about affairs in the western part of the Colony. From documents found here, the rebels there depended for ammunition, etc., on Bloemfontein and the overthrow of the Orange Free State Government practically cripples them, as I felt sure would be the case. Kitchener will remain in that neighbourhood as long as his presence is necessary, but I shall be surprised if he is not able to join me before two or three weeks have elapsed. We find Mr. [*Sir J. G.*] Fraser most useful. . . . P.S.—Your cipher telegram 45 of to-day has just arrived. I will leave sufficient force south of the Orange River to keep the whole country quiet, and will not employ Colonial volunteer corps out of their own Colony. There are, or will be, ample troops now in South Africa to admit of this being done.

Extract from Letter. Lord Roberts to Sir A. Milner.

6/4/00. [PRIVATE] . . . The move southwards of a small Boer force is a nuisance, and will, I am afraid, worry you—but I trust it will not do much harm. I telegraphed to you to-day that I hoped to be able to move northwards some day next week. It may be the week after, for I find the Artillery and Cavalry horses are even worse than I expected, and only a few remounts have arrived as yet. However, when once I move, I trust we shall go on to Kroonstad without much delay. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Roberts to Sir A. Milner.

8/4/00. . . . I am much concerned about this sudden and rapid move of the enemy towards the Orange River, as I know what anxiety it will give you, and what a disturbance it will create in the Colony. The moment it came to my knowledge, I sent Kitchener to Springfontein in view to his watching events in that direction, and I have telegraphed to him to-day to strengthen Bethulie, which the Boers threaten to recapture, and to concentrate the 8th Division, with all possible speed at Burghersdorp. I trust that these measures will check the enemy being able to make any further move southwards, and I shall be greatly disappointed if I am not able to cut them off altogether on their return journey. We have improved slightly in the matter of mobility since you left, but there are still a large number of horses unfit for work, especially in the Artillery. Remounts are coming up almost daily, and we have been fortunate in being able to keep the railway open. . . .

As soon as the rebellion in the north-eastern part of the Cape Colony had been suppressed by General Brabant and the Colonial Division, the High Commissioner made a tour of the Northern Districts (March 19). Accompanied by Sir Richard Solomon, the Attorney-General, he visited Matjesfontein, Victoria West, De Aar, Naauwpoort, Rensburg, Rosmead, Stormberg, Dordrecht, Sterkstroom, Molteno, Burghersdorp, and Aliwal North. At each place Sir Alfred interviewed magistrates and commandants, and did his best to introduce some method and co-ordination into the administration of martial and civil law. In many places on his journey, the bridges had been blown up. After a week thus spent, Sir Alfred proceeded to Bloemfontein to be the guest of the Commander-in-Chief.

Extract from Diary.

March 27. Kitchener arrived from the Prieska quarter. In the evening Lord Roberts and I dined with some newspaper correspondents, Gwynne (*Howell Gwynne, now editor of the "Morning Post"*), (*Sir Percival*) Landon, Julian Ralph, etc. Rudyard Kipling was also present. It was a very successful little gathering.

After much talk with Roberts, Kitchener, and the members of the new Executive, the High Commissioner returned to Cape Town on April 3 to find, of course, "an enormous accumulation of work." Throughout the year, indeed, the pressure was tremendous and incessant. The *Diary* continually records "perfectly frightful

days of overwork . . . almost more than I can do to get through the most pressing papers."

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

30/3/00. . . . I am interested but not much cheered by my journey. The state of the north-east of the Colony is awful, just reeking with treason. And the more I see of the Army, the more unhappy I feel about it. We have been saved by two men—especially one of them,[1] that wonderful old creature with a heart of gold, who alone seems untouched by jealousy, egotism, pettiness. . . . Not that others have not done good work—many have—but it needed someone like him at the head to bring out the good there was. Otherwise I believe we should still have gone stumbling from disaster to disaster. Even now I anticipate plenty more troubles. . . .

If few men have had to bear a greater burden of work and responsibility than that which fell to Milner's lot in these anxious days, few have had their burdens lightened by more generous expressions of sympathy and confidence. Men and women, old friends and strangers, vied with one another in assuring him of their admiration and belief in him, and the deep trust and gratitude with which the British people had come to regard him.

Extract from Letter. Lord Loch[2] to Sir A. Milner.

London. 2/2/00. . . . I hope you will forgive my writing to say how anxiously I have watched all that has been passing and how cordially I concur in the policy you have advocated. War, I consider, has been inevitable ever since Kruger was permitted to import the immense munitions of war—of all kinds—without being checked some long time ago ; but I think the small chance of peace being maintained was lost by not taking a stronger and earlier action in the early months of last year in sufficient force to show we were in earnest. If he was determined to fight it could have done no harm ; if there was a chance of his yielding, it was the only way by which the chance could have been strengthened—and at all events, if war had come, we should have been better prepared. . . . There is a wave of depression that, although natural perhaps with those who know nothing of South Africa or its geography, is I think quite uncalled for—there are grave difficulties to be overcome and dangers to be guarded against, but I venture to think there has been nothing to cause any fear as to the ultimate and very speedy

[1] Lord Roberts. [2] Formerly High Commissioner of South Africa.

(*Duffus Bros.*)

FIELD MARSHAL LORD ROBERTS, V.C.
From a photograph taken at Government House, Cape Town, in December, 1900.

brightening of the situation. . . . Everyone seems to be going or gone to South Africa—men and women. I have raised about two hundred men, all South Africans, the majority having served in some of the local forces (and engaged in the last Matabele war)—in the Cape Mounted Rifles and in the B.B. There are some very good men amongst them—they are fully equipped. . . . I ventured to advocate in the last session of Parliament that after the occupation the annexation of both Republics should be at once proclaimed.

Extract from Letter. Mr. (Sir) Clinton Dawkins to Sir A. Milner.

Calcutta. 3/2/00. . . . I trust I am writing at the darkest hour of the struggle, though it may be that there is still a darker reserved for us. In that case we must steel our nerves still more resolutely, and let " determined things Hold unbewailed their way to destiny." What is satisfactory, up to the present, in spite of all the military incompetencies and muddling, is the temper of the nation, and the courage of our men. England likes running an Empire " on the cheap," it is true, but it seems that, apart from noisy clamours, and the music halls, the real issues were more or less present to the national mind, and that the nation is determined to fight out the controversy on the true issues whatever may be the sacrifices demanded. . . . That is the great thing, and as long as this temper endures, nothing is really ill, and success is assured. . . . You say that your personal feelings, interests, and reflections, have faded to nothing, so thoroughly are you absorbed in the great question. That is a right feeling. . . . But it is a satisfaction to your friends to feel that your personal reputation . . . will come out of the struggle enhanced above all other reputations engaged. For, if the question at stake had not been made clear and brought home to the nation now, the fate of S. Africa would inevitably have been decided against us. As it is, we may and must in the eleventh hour retrieve the big series of blunders in the past, and assert the principles on which the Empire is founded, principles that, if we fail to vindicate them, withdraw from the Empire its justification with their departure and surrender. . . .

Extract from Lord Cromer to Sir A. Milner.

Cairo. 6/3/00. . . . You must be pleased to see how completely everyone has come round to your way of thinking, and how fully it is now recognized that your political forecast was correct. . . . Some people—but I think a small minority—want to leave the two Republics their independence. I cannot help thinking that this would be a great mistake, Strachey's [1] line in

[1] St. Loe Strachey, Editor of the *Spectator*.

the *Spectator* seems to me more sound, i.e. as large a measure of self-government as is possible within the British Empire, and sow the seeds for an ultimate union of the two races. . . . When you have settled the general lines and eventually make your bow, I hope you will get some youngish man to go out and practically devote his lifetime to the work, as I have done here. I do not believe in hurried political evolution. . . . I am glad you like Kitchener. He is a very remarkable man. The stories of friction with me are all nonsense. What happened is this. Before he had made his name, the W.O., etc., were all violently opposed to him. I insisted on his being put in command of the Soudan business and won the day. He did the work admirably. I left him a completely free hand. Later, when the fighting was over, I had to exercise some control. There were naturally a few little rubs, but nothing that mattered. I hope he will eventually be turned loose in the W.O. . . .

The Relief of Ladysmith and Occupation of Pretoria.

In the Orange Free State many of the burghers had availed themselves of Roberts's Proclamation (p. 52) and returned to their farms. But the Boers who had thus been shifted out of the Cape Colony took up a position near Ladybrand upon his right flank. Disregarding Milner's wish that the Free State should first be pacified, and risking the danger of fresh disturbances in the Cape Colony as he advanced farther north, Roberts was determined to go forward into the Transvaal on a front extending from Kimberley to Ladysmith. For Pretoria was the Boers' stronghold, and so long as they held it and Johannesburg, they could obtain all the gold they needed, and stores of war through Lourenço Marques.[1] But before beginning his advance upon Pretoria, Roberts was obliged to pause for precious weeks at Bloemfontein, whilst his troops recovered from the effects of their strenuous march thither, and from an outbreak of enteric fever. To these causes of delay were added the threat of the Boer force upon his flank, and Buller's refusal to help.

As Roberts had calculated, the Boers had withdrawn several thousand men from the Tugela in order to oppose his march to Bloemfontein. The formidable task of breaking through the mountain barrier was thus rendered easier for Buller. On March 1 Lord Dundonald's cavalry rode into Ladysmith, and the siege was

[1] Lord Roberts to Lord Kitchener, Sir George Arthur, "Life of Lord Kitchener," I, p. 306.

raised. Buller now had a unique opportunity of destroying the enemy's retreating force. "The Boers," wrote General Lyttelton, who was present, "dispirited by defeat, encumbered by a huge train of wagons, the Sunday River in flood behind them with only one bridge, were at our mercy."

Nothing could have stopped our men, had they been let go. "Had the British fired a single gun at this surging mob," wrote a Boer who was present, "everything on wheels would have fallen into their hands." [1]

But Buller refused to move. He would not, he said, lose a single life in order to capture the whole Boer camp and transport. He lost a great many by the prolongation of the war due to his inaction. "Few Commanders," is Lyttelton's comment, "have so wantonly thrown away so great an opportunity."

A few days later Buller refused to send Roberts the reinforcements he urgently needed to guard his right flank when he wheeled northwards on his march to Pretoria. For the credit of the army, Roberts assented to his not being recalled.[2] So he remained in Natal, stubbornly delaying co-operation with Roberts. Lord Rawlinson foresaw correctly that the delay thus caused on both fronts would prolong the war for a long time. "The enemy instead of being caught in bulk, would break up into small parties and take to guerilla warfare, which it will cost much time and blood to defeat." [3]

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson.

5/4/00. . . . I hope Buller will soon hurry up and do something. Enemy are hustling Roberts and he has the Colony to guard besides. We want some help from that big force [4] in Natal, if only by way of diversion.

Extract from Letter. Mr. Lyttelton Gell to Sir A. Milner.

2/3/00. . . . The cable will have given you some impression of the extraordinary national feeling evoked by the relief of Ladysmith. . . . There is no doubt that the Territorial Regiments and the Reserves and the local Volunteers (like the City Imperial Volunteers) have combined to link the Army with every social class

[1] Colonel D. Reitz, "Commando," p. 90.

[2] Lord Roberts to Lord Lansdowne, March 31, 1900.

[3] Major-General Sir F. Maurice, "Life of General Lord Rawlinson," pp. 63, 64.

[4] 55,000 men, after the relief of Ladysmith, *War Commission*, App. 9.

in a wonderful way. The people don't like war in itself, and don't care a rap for " Glory," but they are not going to be put upon, and grudge nothing to put this through. . . . They are indifferent to goldfields or territory " per se," and certainly are not revengeful. What they want is—*a clean and final job.* " *Never again !* " is the national axiom just now. . . . The agitation for a weak settlement is beginning. Don't ignore it. So far, it is ineffectual. . . .

The tide had begun to turn. Evidently the two Boer Presidents recognized the fact, for early in March they made overtures for peace. But the conditions they proposed were that the two Republics should be recognized as independent sovereign States, and that British subjects who had fought for them should be granted immunity. Lord Salisbury replied (March 11) by a deadly recital of the facts, and the inevitable conclusion that the use to which the Republics had put the position which was given to them, and the calamities which their unprovoked attack had inflicted upon H.M. Dominions rendered it impossible for H.M. Government to assent any longer to their independence.[1] By playing for supremacy, they had forfeited the independence which they had owed to Great Britain.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. (Viscount) Goschen.

24/3/00. . . . The nation has been *so splendid.* I hope nothing will induce it to relax now, even if the war lasts another six months, but that it will see this thing through, militarily and politically. The justice of our cause, obscured by technicalities and side-issues and by the extreme cleverness of the enemy, is surely now apparent to the most obtuse. An irreconcilable enemy has tried to extinguish us as a power in South Africa. We must extinguish him. There is absolutely no compromise possible. And ultimate peace between the white races is perfectly possible—I am sure of that—but possible only under one condition, that there shall be but one flag and one citizenship. The so-called " loyalists," who are clamouring for the preservation of the Republics, are simply rebels, who have not had the opportunity or the pluck to rebel. . . .

The German Emperor to Queen Victoria.

31/3/00. . . . I am sure that, South Africa once under the British flag, thrift, order, life, commerce and peace with " goodwill towards all men " will be assured.[2]

[1] Cd. 35. See Vol. I, p. 562.

[2] " Letters of Queen Victoria," 3rd Ser., Vol. III, p. 519.

It had now become the fashion with a certain section of Society women to rush out to South Africa with the intention of entertaining themselves and the officers on active service. The charm of their presence and the liveliness of their personalities did not, however, contribute to the serious prosecution of the war. Whilst their more sober and intelligent sisters were doing good work in the political arena or in the hospitals, these others occupied hotel and railway accommodation which might have been put to better military purpose. The mentality of these ladies of fashion is well exemplified by one who, when choosing in London a nurse's uniform for her adventure overseas, explained to the shop assistant that she desired something which would "look effective on a battlefield." These ladies, in fact, became a nuisance and a scandal. Queen Victoria was soon aware of the inconvenience they were causing. Chamberlain thereupon sent the following telegram :

Telegram. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir A. Milner.

3/4/00. The Queen regrets to observe the large number of ladies now visiting and remaining in South Africa, often without imperative reasons, and strongly disapproves of the hysterical spirit which seems to have influenced some of them to go where they are not wanted. I conclude their presence interferes with work of civil and military officers, and they must largely occupy best Hotel accommodation required for wounded and invalid officers.

Can you send telegram, with or without concurrence of Roberts and General Commanding Cape Town, representing that number of lady visitors is now so considerable as to encroach materially on Hotel and Railway accommodation, etc., and otherwise impede business, and suggesting that some notice might be issued here calling attention to inconvenience of this unusual number of ladies visiting seat of war.

This I would submit to the Queen and Her Majesty would instruct me to publish.

Sir Alfred replied diplomatically :

Telegram. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

10/4/00. The number of visitors to South Africa is constantly increasing, and includes many, especially ladies, who seem to have no particular call of duty or business. I am sure this would not be the case if it was realized at home that visitors, who at ordinary times would be most welcome, may under existing circumstances, be a source of serious inconvenience, interfering with the work of military and civil officers, and putting a strain on our limited means

of accommodation, which are urgently required for those who have duties to perform here or who are invalided from the front. The considerable increase in the expense of living, at all times very high, which is caused by the excessive influx of visitors, is a hardship on persons of the latter class, who may not be in possession of large means. I think that many, whose coming here is prompted by nothing more than a general interest in the war, would elect to stay at home if they knew that their presence was a hindrance rather than a help. For persons travelling merely for health or recreation, and, above all, for ladies so travelling, no place could be less suitable at the present moment than South Africa. Field-Marshal Commander-in-Chief to whom I have submitted this message authorizes me to add that he fully concurs in the views expressed.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Miss Bertha Synge.

25/4/00. . . . Apart from the war . . . there is the most fearful bother here with lady visitors, their mutual jealousies, feuds, back-bitings and the total unsuitableness of a sort of quasi-Monte Carlo . . . background to that grim tragedy going on in the Northern Veld. Bah! How I hate it. What between the stupidity of our Generals and the frivollings of the fashionable females, I often feel desperately ashamed of my country. One has to look at the other side, however, the amount of unassuming heroism and devotion, the wonderful fortitude and patience of the loyal Colonials and the splendid men they are sending us now. They seem to be bigger and harder with each succeeding transport. . . .

THE RELIEF OF MAFEKING AND OCCUPATION OF PRETORIA.

When the rebellion in the north-western district of the Cape Colony had been suppressed, steps were taken to relieve Mafeking, and thus to set free the forces there for co-operation with the main offensive. The siege of Mafeking had aroused sympathetic interest throughout the Empire. The smallness of the garrison; the length of the siege; and the cheerful and resourceful leadership of Colonel Baden-Powell all appealed to the sporting spirit of the nation.

Nor was it an insignificant episode in the war. For, for over six months, Mafeking had diverted a large force of Boers from action elsewhere, and had focussed upon itself the whole of the enemy's enterprise on his north-west border. The advance of a small force under Colonel Plumer, which had moved down the Rhodesian railway to its relief, had been arrested north of Mafeking. But a column under Colonel Mahon[1] was now sent from the

[1] General Sir Bryan Mahon.

south, joined hands with Plumer, and drove off the besiegers (May 17).

Several letters from home bore witness to the joy with which the news of the relief of Mafeking was received in England. Some solemn persons were deeply shocked by the manifestations of delight displayed in the Capital, and all those who had been wont to be most contemptuous of British phlegm, now deplored our lapse into continental levity. The rather hysterical celebration of Mafeking which occurred was, in fact, the expression of pent-up feeling by a nation which, for the first time, was taking an active part in a war not wholly conducted by professional soldiers.

Extract from Letter. Lord Roberts to Sir A. Milner.

12/4/00. . . . I doubt much if it is possible for Carrington's force to reach Mafeking in time to save Baden-Powell and his little garrison, nevertheless the troops he will have with him will no doubt be useful in Rhodesia. . . . My hope is that we shall be able to relieve Mafeking from Kimberley. I am sending one of the Brigades of Hunter's division with Hunter himself to Kimberley with orders to force the passage of the Vaal River as soon as the lightly equipped force I hope to have ready can start for Mafeking. . . . Once the Boers are driven off the Vaal River, the little party would be able to make a start. . . . With regard to the wish of the Home Government that the Railway between Lourenço Marques and Pretoria should be destroyed, I am inclined to think we had better fall back on Mr. Forbes, the gentleman who kindly offered to assist us when I was in Cape Town. We might make over 200 of the Australian Bushmen to him (*v.* p. 89). . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Rendel to Sir A. Milner.

19/5/00. . . . We heard last night the excellent news that Mafeking is relieved at last. . . . London is nearly mad with joy. People were shouting, cheering, and singing in the High Street for half the night, and the scene at the Mansion House was, they say, quite extraordinary. . . .

Released from the siege of Kimberley, and now that Mafeking was relieved, Rhodes was losing no time in applying himself to the problems of settlement and the great schemes for railway and telegraph extension which he had always had at heart.

Extract from Letter. Cecil Rhodes to Sir A. Milner.

26/5/00. . . . The bearer, Mr. Ross, one of our native Commissioners, is going to Australia to buy cattle ; kindly advise him,

and give him a letter of introduction. I am already preparing for settling the Colonial or Englishman choosing to remain. I have added to irrigation idea, dry farms with cattle, and am sending Ross to Australia to buy the first 1,000 head. . . . The Colonials are very pleased with this country and they must remain, at any rate some. I sent you a cable as to position of Carrington's force ; he will have them all within three weeks ; the horses with him suffered at first, he lost about 400, but horse sickness is now over and we lost none at Beira. Tell Williams we are pushing reopening through Mafeking. I hope Parliament will do without me, and that Schreiner will do his duty to H.M. Government. I am sure it is better that he should remain in. I am speaking not only from my party point of view, but thinking what is best for H.M. Government. On an election now, which would really be an imperial issue, I am not sure of a majority ; without an election Sprigg would be very heavy weather to keep going, and if we now went to an election we are not ready. Of course the personal weighs with me, for though nominally not leader I know I should be dragged into the matter and have to do the whole work ; and I want to settle the Colonials, start the railway to the Victoria Falls, see the mines personally and form my judgment as to gold prospects, help Milton to start his North-Eastern Rhodesia and see to the telegraph to Egypt, besides many other minor details. I am glad Rhodesia has done so well both as to forwarding supplies and furnishing men for relief of Mafeking, and Baden-Powell has thanked them very nicely for their help. He is a good example of thinking of others and showing some feeling of gratitude, which is generally absolutely lacking in his profession. As far as Kimberley was concerned, my Corporation got nothing but abuse, though I really think we materially helped the position, so Powell's thanks to us here are at least a pleasant contrast. . . .

When Roberts was at length able to begin his advance upon the Transvaal, it proceeded swiftly and successfully. Kroonstad was entered on May 13, Johannesburg at the end of the month, and Pretoria on June 5.

Once more the veteran of Kandahar had shown his genius for long and dangerous marches. Once more his lovable and loyal nature, and ever-present consideration for his men, were rewarded when he called upon them to do their utmost for their Queen and Country. Once more he showed the vision of military genius for the true objective and concentrated all his force upon it. He took great risks, and he knew it. He had nearly outrun his supplies. Failure would have meant starvation and disaster. But he refused

to be deterred by the threat to his communications from risings and isolated enemy successes in his rear. His goal was the enemy's headquarters, where 3,000 British soldiers were imprisoned. He pressed on unswervingly, and reached it. It was a performance which, in the opinion of the German historians, " must ever remain remarkable in the history of war."

" Kruger's Millions."

As Roberts approached Pretoria, Kruger was filled with apprehension. He had narrowly escaped being taken prisoner at Poplar Grove ; he was afraid of being captured now. When evening fell on May 29 he suddenly left for Machadodorp, accompanied by a few officials and an escort of police. General Botha, speaking subsequently in Berlin, denied that Kruger carried the State Chest with him into exile. The statement was true, so far as it went. Kruger did not take any gold with him, only his salary in silver. The State treasure followed him from Pretoria, and preceded him to Europe. For during the next few days (May 29–June 4), the railway station at Pretoria presented an extraordinary spectacle. Cab after cab arrived from the State Mint and the National Bank, loaded with gold bars and coins valued at over £800,000, which were transhipped into trucks. Five truck-loads of gold thus reached Machadodorp. The last train had been nearly wrecked as it left Pretoria by a shell from Roberts's army which exploded on the track. In addition, there were 5,158 shares held by the Government in the Netherlands S.A. Railway Company, valued at one and a half millions. Apart from this, there was the gold seized before the outbreak of war (*v.* Vol. I, p. 555), and gold taken from the mines during the war, amounting together to two and a half millions sterling, some of which had been embezzled by officials.

The greater part of the State archives had already been removed. Thirty boxes filled with documents were presently forwarded to Brussels and passed into the custody of Dr. Leyds. But what became of that gold and those shares? Milner took great pains to investigate the matter, in the hope of recovering some of these funds when they had become the property of the British Government by the fortune of war, so that it might be applied, not to Boer propaganda abroad, but to the relief of the people of the Transvaal from whom it had been derived. It appears that the gold and " blue back " bills at Machadodorp were secretly disposed of by the Boer Cabinet. Part of the treasure passed into

the hands of Steyn and other Boer leaders to be used as a war chest. The greater part—fifty-one boxes of bar gold, packed in flour bags and bales of wool, and worth £600,000—was shipped from Lourenço Marques to Hamburg on board the *Styria*, *Bundesrath*, etc., in August and September. A test action for recovery was brought in the German Courts, but was decided against the plaintiffs, and the gold was remitted to Dr. Leyds on behalf of the late South African Republic (Milner Papers, XVII, 4 and 5).

Such are the facts. But the myth of Kruger's millions has grown into a tradition not unlike that of Captain Kidd's buried treasure. The story persists that much of it was buried on the veldt, or again, that it was sunk in a schooner in St. Lucia Bay. Much money and many lives have been spent in the endeavour to salvage it. The records show what became of it, as they have shown what became of Kidd's treasure.[1] But perhaps it is vain to expect that documentary evidence will triumph over the lure of missing gold.

The final division of these moneys, amounting approximately to £1,294,940, was as follows :

	£	£
Bar gold, sent to Europe . . .	600,000	
Paid to sundry creditors . . .	94,000	
		694,000
Notes and coin advanced to President Steyn and other Boer leaders .	350,000	
Taken by the Government . .	150,000	
Paid to sundry creditors . . .	100,000	
		600,000
		£1,294,000

(Milner Papers, XVII, i, 14.)

Burning of Farms.

In the Orange Free State it was soon found that the leniency of Roberts's Bloemfontein Proclamation (March 15) was being abused. In many instances the Burghers had availed themselves of it merely in order to return and rest at their farms, and thereafter to go out again upon commando. A sterner Proclamation was therefore issued on June 1. The Orange River Colony being now British territory, any of the inhabitants found in arms would, it was announced, be treated henceforth as rebels. All arms were

[1] "Calendar of Colonial State Papers, 1699–1701." Ed. Cecil Headlam.

ordered to be given up (Cd. 261, p. 191). Threats of this kind were futile, unless it was intended to enforce them by extreme penalties, and that, as Lord Roberts's following letter (April 18) shows, it was not intended to do. Nor would it have been just, unless the province had been firmly held by a force strong enough to protect those who had returned to their farms from the terrorization of roving commandos. But this Roberts's advance to Pretoria had rendered impossible. The result was that the surrendered Free Staters freely rejoined their commandos and shared in raids upon the railways. Unfulfilled threats, accompanied by the evacuation of towns and territories once occupied, they regarded as signs of weakness on the part of the British. Severer measures were then adopted. By Roberts's Proclamations of August 14 and September 1, the Boers of both Colonies were warned that all burghers who had not taken the oath would be treated as prisoners of war, and "transported or otherwise dealt with as I may determine." [1] Buildings harbouring the enemy would be liable to be razed to the ground, and burghers failing to acquaint the British with the presence of belligerents upon their farms would be regarded as aiding and abetting the enemy. A few weeks later it was announced (Sept. 22 and 28) that the stock and supplies of burghers in the field, or those who had broken their oaths, would be seized and the houses of leaders of bands of snipers burned. This measure failed as a means of intimidation, and whilst causing intense bitterness among the Boers, aroused so much opposition in England that it was modified in the following November.

Even so, farm-burning was not confined to one side :

Extract from Letter. Commandant-General Botha to Commandant Bethal.

6/10/00. . . . Do everything in your power to prevent the burghers laying down their arms. I shall be compelled, if they do not listen to this, to confiscate everything, movable or unmovable, and also to burn their houses. . . . (Cd. 663, p. 5.)

Extract from Letter. Lord Roberts to Sir A. Milner.

18/4/00. . . . I am obliged to you for sending me a copy of the Secretary of State's despatch with reference to the treatment of rebels. I hope the matter will end in a special Commission being appointed, with statutory powers, to try rebels. Until I hear from you again, I will not confirm any more Court Martial sentences, and will order no more to be held until further orders.

[1] Cd. 426, pp. 14–16.

The sentences are more or less of a farce when they must come to an end concurrently with the termination of Martial Law. For no one supposes or wishes that Martial Law will be in force a day longer than is absolutely necessary. . . . The enclosed letter from Mr. Schreiner to President Steyn will interest you.

Extract from Letter. Lord Roberts to Sir A. Milner.

30/4/00. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . I am delighted to find from your letter of the 27th inst. that your views and mine are in accord as to the necessity for dealing promptly and severely with farmers who laid down their arms under the conditions of my Proclamation, and then fought against us. I have already tried a well-to-do man near this at whose farm a soldier was shot by the Boers, who had the white flag flying on his roof, and who had taken his oath to remain neutral. The Court Martial sentenced him to one year's imprisonment and confiscation of his property. Another equally wealthy man is to be tried to-day for a very similar offence. I have done, too, what you suggest in your letter about dividing the State into military divisions, and am placing a District Governor at the Head Quarters of each to carry out a thorough disarmament and to requisition all riding animals. . . . Writing to Lord Lansdowne yesterday I said that the most anti-English farmer would be of little use as a fighting unit, if he had no rifle to fire and no horse to ride. These military centres will really be fortified posts. They will be sufficiently garrisoned, and well provided with food and ammunition. The District Governors will be able to make themselves acquainted with the people, and to select those who are for and against us, and I hope that, under their rule, the country will gradually settle down. . . .

In response to a request from a correspondent, for an authoritative pronouncement upon the alleged " wholesale burning of homesteads in the Orange Free State and the Transvaal," Sir Alfred replied :

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. T. Kerr Anderson.

12/9/00. . . . I think the extent to which this severe measure has been resorted to is much exaggerated. Where farms have been burned, I believe it has always been under circumstances which justified such a proceeding under the recognized rules of civilized warfare. I am sure that no one regrets the necessity of such measures more than the Commander-in-Chief who has authorized them, and whose conduct of the war throughout has been marked by singular humanity and leniency. But when a farmhouse, flying the white flag, is used to decoy our soldiers into an ambush, or

when a man, who has been set free under an oath of neutrality, harbours or gives information to the enemy, it is necessary to punish such treachery in a manner calculated to prevent its recurrence, and to check the indefinite prolongation of the war by illegitimate means. No doubt innocent women and children may suffer from the punishment inflicted in consequence of the treachery of the head of the household, but so may the innocent wives and children and other relatives of the soldiers who fall victims to such treachery, and, of the two, the latter seem to be entitled to the greater consideration. . . .

Although Sir Alfred thus defended the burning of farms for treachery, he strongly disapproved of indiscriminate destruction of crops and houses, on the grounds that it would be (i) barbarous, (ii) ineffectual, and (iii) would leave behind it a legacy of bitterness.[1]

Nor was he satisfied with the proposal, communicated to him by Lord Roberts on September 25, that a date should be fixed after which everybody still in arms against us should be regarded as a rebel.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lord Roberts.

25/9/00. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . I think we are *technically* justified in doing this, for we have formally annexed the country ; therefore, according to a strict interpretation of our action, all those still fighting against us *are* rebels. But in common fairness I do not quite see how we can so treat them, as long as we do not merely annex, but *effectively occupy*. When we have driven the enemy out of a district and *hold on to it*, establishing some form of government and doing our best to maintain it, I think we are justified in proclaiming that any inhabitant of such district found in arms against us, or harbouring the enemy, shall be treated with the utmost severity, even with death. But when we merely march through a district, even several times, without attempting to govern or to hold it, I hardly feel that we can deal equally severely with its inhabitants, if, being left to their fate, they take up arms—possibly, indeed, probably, under compulsion. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir A. Milner.

25/11/00. [PRIVATE] . . . I entirely agree with your general policy and entertain the same views as yourself about the undesirability of wholesale destruction of farms and property. Where there has been treachery or breach of parole I do not see any objection

[1] Cf. Ch. IV, p. 164. Despatch of Feb. 6, 1900. Cd. 547, p. 55.

to the severest measures, though I should like them to be personal rather than directed against property and consequently to the injury of innocent persons. I recognize Lord Roberts's difficulties and am very anxious for the time when you can take control of the new Colonies. . . .

The capture of Pretoria was followed by a successful campaign in the newly proclaimed Orange River Colony, where De Wet had been raiding Roberts's long line of communications. At the end of July General Hunter, by a brilliant series of operations in the Brandwater district, compelled the surrender of over 4,000 Boers under Marthinus Prinsloo. But the first great "De Wet hunt" ended in disappointment. It was on the verge of success when Ian Hamilton's neglect to occupy Olifants Nek enabled De Wet, Steyn, and the rest of the Free State Government to escape to the north. De Wet had other narrow escapes in the Western Transvaal, where De la Rey, always active and skilful, rendered the British occupation for some time ineffective. For Roberts, in conjunction with Buller's Natal army, was pursuing his main objective, the dispersion of the Boer main army in the Eastern Transvaal, along the Pretoria–Komati Poort railway (July 16).

Botha's forces were outflanked and broken up; Kruger fled to Portuguese territory (Sept. 11), and sailed for Europe, leaving Schalk Burger to act as President in his absence, whilst Roberts issued a Proclamation annexing the South African Republic to the British Dominions (Sept. 1).

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lord Roberts.

28/6/00. . . . I gather that there is a most undesirable, and in any case wholly premature, agitation springing up at Johannesburg, having for its object the transference of the seat of government to that town from Pretoria. The question is a difficult one, about which there is much to be said on both sides, and I reserve my judgment about it, though, as at present advised, I certainly lean rather against Johannesburg. But in any case it is quite evident to me that H.M. Government cannot allow its hand to be forced by the Johannesburg people or a selection of them. . . . I hope by the time this letter reaches you that you will have succeeded in completing your arrangements to stamp out resistance in the Orange River Colony. That sort of guerilla warfare must be very difficult to deal with. But I feel sure that it is good business to put down the enemy in the rear before tackling the remaining forces of the enemy in the east of the Transvaal, where, with Delagoa

Bay still accessible, they may, I fear, hang on for some months longer. I am sorry to have had to differ with General Baden-Powell, who has been so successful in subjugating the west of the Transvaal, about the disarmament of natives in the Protectorate. I feel sure that he greatly overestimates the difficulty of keeping these—in truth exceedingly amenable and pacific—natives in order. Of course they are rather excited just now. But for years past they have been perfectly submissive to Goold-Adams and the High Commissioner, though we have only had a very small police force, and I feel confident that they will in future be equally manageable, even if we leave them their arms, which are not very formidable, and which to a great extent are really necessary to them for hunting and for the protection of their stock against wild beasts. . . . I am delighted to hear that you had packed off a whole posse of Hollander employees. . . . [*from the Delagoa Bay railway*].

Telegram. Lord Roberts to Sir A. Milner.

16/7/00. [SECRET] We are now established upon a most momentous, and what I trust will prove a most successful phase of the campaign. The two forces of the enemy are completely separated by nearly 200 miles. Orange Free Staters—about 7,000 in number—are concentrated in hilly country between Bethlehem and Ficksburg and are practically surrounded by two divisions under Hunter and Rundle and two brigades under Clements and Paget. If they stand there [1] they ought to be brought to terms, and if they are able to break through our troops, only small bodies of them will, I hope, get away. Hunter, who is in command, reports that active operations will commence on 20th inst. The Transvaalers numbering about 12,000 pretty well surround Pretoria on west, north and east, and have cut off communication between this and Rustenberg. I have brought Methuen's column to Krugersdorp, having reinforced it by some troops from this under Smith-Dorrien. Their orders are to clear the road to Rustenberg and set free Baden-Powell, who will then take charge of district immediately to north of Pretoria while I move eastward along Delagoa Bay Railway. Ian Hamilton begins this morning to drive enemy east of Pretoria–Rustenberg Railway. He will be assisted by force under Mahon between that Railway and Delagoa Bay line. Pole-Carew's division holds high ground covering latter railway which he has occupied since June 12. Next to him on south comes Hutton's Mounted Infantry, and on his right again I shall have French with two brigades of cavalry by to-morrow morn-

[1] The message was received in a mutilated form. I am indebted to Lady Roberts for information as to the original version.

ing. I have asked Buller to assist if possible by sending force to Bethel on 19th inst.

Extract from Letter. Lord Roberts to Sir A. Milner.

10/8/00. . . . Affairs are progressing satisfactorily. It may seem to you as if we were moving slowly, but this is a big country, and having only a single line of railway is a terrible drawback, especially as there can be no night travelling on account of the many accidents that have occurred lately. You know that De Wet and Steyn, after breaking through Hunter's cordon, moved N.W., followed by Broadwood and Little's cavalry. When they reached the Vaal they pulled up, and I heard that the burghers objected to leaving the shelter of the hills in which they found themselves. Meanwhile we were able to bring up enough troops to prevent De Wet turning back into the Orange River Colony, unless he could manage to cross the Vaal and recross it again east of Vereeniging. This is what I hear he wished to do. On the 6th he crossed the Vaal, and found himself headed by Methuen who engaged him the morning of the 7th inst. This turned him eastward, where Kitchener met him yesterday afternoon near Lindeque. De Wet was then making for the north. Should he attempt to cross the Krugersdorp–Potchefstroom Railway, he will be checked by a force under Smith-Dorrien placed at Banks Station. This should give time for Kitchener and Methuen to close in upon him. Should he manage to give Smith-Dorrien the slip, Ian Hamilton is at Commando's Nek (where the Crocodile River passes through the Magaliesberg range) ready to move south, west, or east, as occasion may require. While if he turns eastward, south of Johannesburg, he will be met by a very considerable force I am collecting at the junction of the Natal and Transvaal railways. It seems scarcely possible that De Wet and Steyn can get away now. The very moment matters are settled with them, I shall hurry off to Middelburg, and force Kruger either to retire into the Lydenburg country where we will hem him in, give himself up, or escape into Portuguese territory. Mrs. Steyn has reached Bloemfontein. She represents herself as " absolutely without funds." Not a very dignified position for the wife of the man who still claims to be President of the O.F.S. Don't let the report of the conspiracy to carry me off alarm you. I am taking all possible precautions to ensure my safety, and I doubt much if the plot could have succeeded. All concerned in it will be sent away except the ringleaders, who will be tried by Court Martial.[1] I hope you will arrange for an Act of Indemnity being

[1] Hans Cordua, the German instigator of this conspiracy, was shot, *v.* " *The Times* History of the War in South Africa," VI, p. 574.

passed to cover all proceedings carried out under Martial Law. Otherwise there may be endless trouble. . . . Don't place any credence in reports about my being in bad health. Buller for some reason made up his mind I was looking worn out, and told his people so when he returned from his visit to Pretoria. I am perfectly well and fit for any amount of work, mental or physical. As a rule I get too much of the former and too little of the latter, but on the whole I am most flourishing. There is not the least use in the exiles worrying themselves about Johannesburg. No one will be allowed to return until peace is made. You shall then have the earliest possible notice so that you may arrange the order in which you think leaves should be given. . . . (*Note by A. M.:* "More sanguine than convincing.")

Prisoners' Camps.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lord Roberts.

23/8/00. . . . I am rather afraid that you reckon me among the "unreasonable" people, who expect the conquest of countries as big as France and the United Kingdom put together to be effected at express speed, without supplies and without adequate means of communication. . . . So far from being unreasonable, or an alarmist, I have protested from the first against the idea that the war was over when we took Pretoria, and I protest now against the idea that there is any cause for despondency, because it is not yet over. There is nothing which has happened, since the taking of Pretoria, except perhaps De Wet's remarkable agility, which might not reasonably have been expected, or could, as far as I can see, have been prevented. I mean nothing affecting the main course of the campaign, for, of course, individual blunders have happened, and must happen, in all campaigns, and especially in campaigns where so many things are going on at once, and no human brain can possibly control the details of all of them. . . .

I think the duration of resistance on the part of the enemy depends largely on our policy with regard to those who surrender. That is a question on which I held one view, when you first entered Orange River, but now, taught by experience, hold a diametrically opposite one. Ever since what I may call the first relapse, i.e. the recapture by the enemy of nearly the whole south-east of the Free State in April, I have been convinced that it was no use allowing the Boers simply to surrender and go back to their farms, but that from all districts, where the possibility of a return of armed Commandos was not absolutely excluded, it was better to remove the able-bodied men and keep them in safe custody elsewhere. You

may remember I was for "kraaling" the Kroonstad surrenderers last May, and I have stuck to the idea ever since. It was a great relief to me to see that you decided to send away practically the whole haul made by Hunter (all except the boys and quite old men, who by themselves are harmless). And I trust we shall continue to do this till the end of the war.

But while I am all for making them prisoners, I am less convinced of the wisdom of sending them across the sea. No doubt we are right to send a good lot, because it would not be safe to keep them all in South Africa. But when Ceylon and St. Helena, which can hold 8,000 between them, have been filled up we shall still, I believe, have to face the problem of providing for some thousands of prisoners in South Africa, over and above those at Cape Town and Simons Town, where we can manage about 5,000 all told. And I think, if once we can make up our minds to a camp or camps in South Africa, we shall find it an absolute advantage in this respect, that the Boers will yield more readily—the average Boers, I mean—if they do not think they are going to be sent across the sea. My idea is that many of the more pacific of them would be only too glad to stop fighting, if they could be sure that they would be protected against being again commandeered and, at the same time, would not be sent out of the country. Both these objects would be secured *by keeping them in custody in South Africa*. And it is a big country. Whatever else South Africa is short of, it does not lack space. There are at least half a dozen places in the Colony, having (*a*) water, (*b*) railway communication to bring up supplies, (*c*) *lots of room*, in which camps could be put many hundreds of miles from any possible roving Commando. I once suggested Aliwal, but, if that is too near the O.R.C., there are places like Matjesfontein and Beaufort West on the Western line, or Stormberg, Sterkstroom, Queens Town, King Williams Town, and many others on the eastern system, where prisoners could be located in considerable numbers. No doubt there is the business of guarding them. But it would, as it seems to me, be better to spare even a couple of Militia Regiments for that, than to have the Boers where they may rise again. As long as we continue liable to *considerable insurrections* in our rear, stirred up by small roving Commandos, I don't see how the thing is going to end. If no Militia can be spared, why not pick a Volunteer Guard from the Uitlanders, who are loafing about the Cape Ports? Many respectable men among them are in extreme distress. They would be glad to do anything for a living. . . . I am confident that, if the plan of forming prisoners' camps were once adopted, it would not be so very difficult for the G.O.C. here to work out the details, which you cannot, of course, be bothered with. And,

unless we do begin to make preparations, I foresee that we soon shall be in a great difficulty. All existing camps, whether on this Continent or on the available islands, will soon be full. We must either provide more, or return to the system of merely taking the men's arms and letting them go home, which has been proved inadequate.

Apart from prisoners of war, who form a chapter by themselves, there is another class of arrests which continues to cause me some uneasiness. I refer to *the deportation of undesirable persons*. These are either (1) Afrikanders, whether burghers of the Transvaal and O.R. Colony, or Colonial residents in these countries, or (2) foreigners. As regarding (1) I still hold, that they are often more dangerous down here than they would be at Johannesburg or elsewhere in the conquered territories. This place simply reeks with sedition, and so do many other Colonial towns (Stellenbosch, where there are several deported persons, being particularly noxious). But if there are men of this class, who must be got rid of from up country, then it really would be a great help if notice could always be sent to us of the intention of despatching them, so that we might at least have time to make a suggestion, if the threatened visitor was particularly undesirable here, or if he could be disposed of with much less mischief in one place than in another. In the cases where men have been sent down by your direct orders, you have been kind enough to let me know. But in other instances, and pretty numerous ones, the "rubbish has been shot here" without any sort of warning. And this has been even more frequently the case with (2) foreigners. The first I hear of these is generally a visit or a letter from an excited Consul. . . . My plea is for *a little more system*. The German Consul-General here has made a request to me, which seems so reasonable that I have promised to recommend it to you. It is this: that no German subject should be expelled without previous communication with his Consul, to give the latter, should he think fit, an opportunity of making representations on the man's behalf. . . . I hope that a careful note is kept, whenever a man is sent away, of the circumstances of his case and the grounds for his removal. Such a record will be invaluable, when we have to answer, as we certainly shall have in some cases, the protests of foreign governments, and may in many cases save us from claims for compensation. . . .

I see from your telegram received this morning, that you deprecate the suspension of Martial Law in the districts adjoining the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal. In this I entirely agree, and should certainly not assent to any repeal in these districts without previous reference to you. On the whole, however, I do not think Ministers will press for it. The Opposition are always nagging

about Martial Law, and a great number of awkward questions are constantly arising under it. But all sensible and well-affected people recognize that, in view of the character of the present struggle, it is necessary to maintain Martial Law even in districts apparently quite pacified, as long as there is the slightest risk of a fresh rising. One of our greatest troubles here just now, as I daresay you gather, is the growing impatience of the refugees. It is, of course, preposterous to ask you to let people return, when you have so much difficulty in supplying those already on the spot. I keep on explaining this to all and sundry, and, on the whole, the better class of Uitlanders are very good in helping to try and allay discontent. The difficulty is, that there really exists considerable and growing destitution, and men are apt to be unreasonable on empty stomachs. I fear that we shall have to make a further appeal to charity. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Roberts to Sir A. Milner.

3/9/00. . . . I assure you I do not in any way include you among the " unreasonable " people who seem to be disappointed because the war did not come to an end when Pretoria was occupied. As a war perhaps it may have come to an end, but a guerilla warfare, much more troublesome to deal with, only then began. I quite sympathize with the people who so eagerly desire to return to their occupations in Johannesburg and Pretoria, and with you in having so frequently to refuse their applications, and I most sincerely wish that permits could be given to all to go back to their homes, but at the present time it would be quite impossible to provide for the many wants of the troops and to feed a large civil population. When the refugees hear that the poor inhabitants now in Johannesburg are reduced to eating horse flesh, and have to pay £5 for a bag of potatoes, all but the most unreasonable will, I think, realize that the time has not yet arrived for a general in-rush of civilians to be allowed.

I agree with you that leniency is not appreciated by the Boers, and that an oath committing them to neutrality has apparently no binding effect upon them. I have, therefore, felt it necessary to withdraw the earlier Proclamations, under the conditions of which burghers could return to their farms on delivering up their arms, and taking an oath not to fight again. The new Proclamation (No. 12) makes all men prisoners of war whether they are captured or give themselves up. Where to send Prisoners of War and " irreconcilables " is, as you say, a burning question. Although I cannot go so far as you in thinking the latter class would be less dangerous in Johannesburg or in the Orange River Colony than in the Cape Colony, I can quite understand your difficulty

in having these people in the South ready to stir up the latent sedition existing there. I am in favour of your proposal to form a large camp at Matjesfontein or Beaufort West, whichever you prefer. I will find a guard for it, and will despatch it to whichever place you may select. I am very sorry you should have been put to inconvenience by undesirables having been sent to Cape Town without due notice being previously given to you. I have given strict injunctions regarding this in the sense of the suggestions contained in your letter under reply, and trust you will not be troubled about these people in future. An accurate record is kept of all such expulsions, and the reasons of the same are carefully noted, so far as this is possible, but there are cases when it would be difficult to state more than that such and such a person's presence is undesirable. I am glad you agree with me as to the maintenance of Martial Law in places where it may appear unnecessary to those not conversant with the circumstances of the locality. And I am delighted to see that your Government has secured a majority on this point after a long and acrimonious discussion in the House. I hope we are by degrees approaching the end of the war. The numbers against us are certainly decreasing, and I suspect they are getting short of gun ammunition, but the guerilla phase which the war has assumed is very troublesome to deal with. . . .

With the occupation of Komati Poort the control of the Delagoa Bay Railway up to the Portuguese frontier passed into British hands. The Boers were now cut off from communication with the outer world. Attempts had been made earlier in the year to cut the railway and thus hinder supplies reaching the Boers through Lourenço Marques.

Mr. (Sir Roger) Casement, Consul-General at Lourenço Marques, had reported that it was possible to destroy the line by a raid on the Transvaal side. Buller had opposed the project, but on April 6, H.M. Government instructed Sir Alfred to consider the question " most seriously " with Roberts. Prolonged consultations were held by the High Commissioner with the Commander-in-Chief, General Forestier-Walker, Colonel Trotter, Chief Staff Officer, Admiral Harris, Mr. Casement, and Mr. David Forbes, Jun., who had suggested this step so far back as January. It was decided that an attempt should be made by the 600 Canadians (Strathcona's Horse) under Colonel Steele and a body of Sappers under Captain Livingstone. The plan was to land a small party at Kosi Bay, who should pass through Swaziland to blow up the bridge, and entrench themselves by the line, until they were reinforced by the

main body, who were to join them from Eshowe. It was hoped that by sending the main force along the western border of Zululand, the Boers would not suspect the design, but think they were going to support Buller. Surprise was the essence of the scheme. It was abandoned when, on reaching Kosi Bay, the squadron learned that the Boers had been warned. But among the Milner Papers are the instructions for the expedition which Sir Alfred prepared for Colonel Steele, "who sails to-day for Kosi Bay" (May 29), and which he had communicated to Roberts.[1]

Extract from Letter. Lord Roberts to Sir A. Milner.

2/5/00. [PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL] . . . I have acted as you recommended . . . and commuted the sentence of penal servitude passed on Jan Johannes Booysen to six months' imprisonment, and on Van der Walt to one year's imprisonment. I should never have confirmed such severe sentences, had I not been under the impression that they would come to an end with the expiry of Martial Law. I have directed the young Engineer Officer named in your telegram received this morning to proceed without delay to Cape Town to accompany Mr. Forbes. I am very glad you suggested a second R.E. officer being with the party. . . . I shall be interested in hearing of your interview with Mr. Forbes, and am only sorry that it is out of my power to help more directly in fitting out the little expedition. Mr. Forbes should keep his own counsel and not communicate with anyone in Natal. In the event of Buller questioning him, he should reply that he is employed on a secret service by my orders. . . .

With the occupation of the two Boer capitals the second phase of the war was brought to a conclusion. In three short months, as if by magic, the whole situation had been retrieved.

The third phase was to be the guerilla war which Lord Rawlinson had foretold. For the Boer resistance had been broken, but not crushed. General Joubert had died in March. A noble and clean-handed patriot, he had fought for independence and not aggression; and died as he had lived, respected by all. He was succeeded in the command of the Boer forces by a man of real military genius, Louis Botha. The new leadership, reinforced by the energy and determination of other youthful commanders who had come to the front, was already imposing better discipline and organization in the field. Much was hoped, though the hope proved vain, from a

[1] For other attempts, see "*The Times* History of the War in South Africa," V, p. 386.

Mission which had been sent to Europe to invoke the intervention of European Powers, whilst successes recently gained by De Wet at Kornspruit, Reddesburg, and Sannah's Post renewed enthusiasm, and revealed the possibilities of prolonged resistance in a new form of warfare eminently suited to the country and the qualities of the combatants. The guerilla warfare which ensued was no haphazard affair. It was deliberately adopted by the Boer leaders, and deliberately adapted to their military organization and resources.

By this time the arrogant and aggressive spirit in which the war had been begun, in the hope of dominating South Africa "from the Cape to the Zambesi," had died away among the Boer patriots. In its place there burned with an intensified and purer light the Boer's enduring love of personal independence. The definite campaigns were over, and had ended in defeat. But breaking up into small detachments, riding hither and thither on a series of raids, throughout a vast area of friendly country with which they were familiar, and in which they might hope to harass or entrap the enemy and rouse their kinsmen to arms; undistinguished by uniforms or even clad in captured khaki; peaceful agriculturists one day and on commando the next; for eighteen months still these sturdy Dutch farmers, brilliantly led, fought gallantly on, undeterred by infinite hardships, unshaken by innumerable hair-breadth escapes, in a passion of patriotism and blind hate of British interference; dour, desperate, irreconcilable.

The history of British Colonial wars, from Burma to New Zealand, supplied warnings enough of the immense advantages enjoyed by an enemy conducting such an irregular warfare in his own country under conditions of his own choosing. The task which lay before the British military Chiefs was still one of extraordinary difficulty and complexity.

CHAPTER III

Cape Politics and Cape Rebels

LORD SALISBURY, in rejecting the overtures for peace by the two Republics (Ch. II, p. 72), had observed that they "claimed to treat the inhabitants of extensive portions of H.M. Dominions, as if those dominions had been annexed to one or other of them." The Dutch Governments had avowedly annexed British dominions north of the Orange River. Annexation, too, with or without the authority of their Governments, and the proclamation of Martial Law were the usual procedure of commandos on entering Natal or the Cape Colony. The "occupied" territory was treated as Boer territory, and British subjects as Boer subjects. The Boer commandants would read a Proclamation, with which they had been supplied in a stereotyped form, annexing the invaded district, and inform their Governments of their action. They would then appoint a Committee to commandeer supplies and give the inhabitants the choice of leaving or staying under the *Vierkleur*. Their object, in part, was to afford the pretext of compulsion to those who wished to join them, without incurring the consequences of being treated as rebels. The two Presidents, indeed, when they learned that some of such rebels had been charged with high treason, actually claimed that, as those who had joined the Boers were considered by them as citizens of their States, they should be treated as prisoners of war, like old citizens.[1]

Extract from Despatch. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

16/1/00. . . . In the invaded districts [*of the Cape Colony*] the method of occupation has always been more or less the same. The procedure is as follows: A Commando enters, the Orange Free State flag is hoisted, a meeting is held in the courthouse or market-place, and a Proclamation is read annexing the district. The Commandant then makes a speech, in which he explains that the people must now obey the Free State laws generally, though

[1] Cd. 261, p. 5.

they are at present under martial law. A local Landdrost is appointed, and loyal subjects are given a few days or hours in which to quit, or be compelled to serve against their country. In either case they lose their property to a greater or less extent. If they elect to quit, they are often robbed before starting or on the journey ; if they stay, their property and themselves are commandeered. . . .

Seeing that statements were persistently being made by and on behalf of the two Presidents that their Governments had never annexed any portion of the Cape Colony or Natal, Sir Alfred sent home a series of despatches, with evidence showing the procedure of the Commandants and their communications on the subject to their Governments.[1]

Extract from Telegram. Commandant-General Joubert to President Kruger.

28/11/99. . . . We have taken the country, and as far as we have taken it proclaimed it, and we now commandeer the inhabitants up for our service, and should they now be excluded from the privileges granted to our other burghers, it would be a deadly sin on our part if we go and agree to it. . . .

Extract from Telegram. Landdrost Munnik, Aliwal North, to Government, Pretoria.

26/11/99. . . . Yesterday the commando of Commandant Olivier annexed this splendid country ; the Afrikanders are rejoicing, and joining the commandos is universal. . . .

Acting upon instructions from the Secretary of State, Sir Alfred issued counter-proclamations, warning H.M. subjects to disregard such annexations by the Republics, on pain of prosecution for high treason (Cd. 43, pp. 99–102, 166, 218, 219).

The extraordinary view propounded by the two Presidents as to the position of rebels bore no relation to the treatment meted out to British and Dutch loyalists by the Boer leaders. But it is rendered more intelligible by the speeches of English sympathizers with the Boers, and of certain members of the Cape Ministry, when pleading for an amnesty (p. 109). In January, Leonard (Lord) Courtney, who had already described Milner as " a lost mind," issued his notorious " manifesto," whilst James (Lord) Bryce and John (Viscount) Morley (June 10) spoke on behalf of that section of the Liberal party which denounced the war as " a great wrong," and advocated the re-establishment of the two

[1] Cd. 261, pp. 95, 126, 160–81 ; Cd. 420, pp. 91–109 ; 264, p. 5.

Republics. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, indeed, gave general assent to the necessity of annexation (June 7), and Liberal Imperialists led by Rosebery, Haldane, Asquith, Grey and Sir Henry Fowler, continued to assert the determination of the British people to see the war through. But from the beginning of the year 1900 determined efforts began to be made by the pro-Boer party at home to promote a settlement which would leave the Dutch Republics in the *statu quo ante*, in accordance with the terms proposed by Kruger and Steyn.[1]

A "Stop the War" Committee became active, and the retirement of the High Commissioner was eagerly canvassed, on the grounds that his continued presence would make a prompt and satisfactory settlement difficult. The opinion of the loyalists and Sir Alfred's influence with them were characteristically disregarded.

The beginnings of this movement had been reported by Sir Alfred in his letter to Chamberlain quoted above (Ch. II, p. 65). For the Bond party at the Cape could not remain blind to the determination of the British people and the magnitude of their military preparations. It was time to endeavour to rescue their friends across the border from an enterprise which had not worked out according to plan. Foreign intervention and British collapse had not followed upon the early successes of the Boers. But the situation could still be saved by negotiating a compromising settlement beneath the cloak of the blessed word "conciliation." A series of "conciliation" meetings was therefore held throughout the Colony, in order to strengthen the hands of English sympathizers in support of the peace overtures of the two Presidents.

The manner in which this manœuvre was engineered, and its objects, are made plain by documents captured when Roberts entered Bloemfontein (Milner Papers, XVII).

Extract from Telegram. President Kruger to President Steyn.

20/1/00. A certain E. T. Hargrove, an English journalist, about whom Dr. Leyds formerly wrote that he had done much in Holland to work up the peace memorial to Queen Victoria, has come here, as he says, from Sauer and Merriman, who are ready to range themselves openly on our side, to make propaganda in the Cape Colony, provided an official declaration is given that the Republics only desire to secure complete independence. . . . He thinks that a great propaganda can be made in the Cape Colony, whereby influence can be brought to bear again on the English

[1] Cd. 261, p. 5.

people and the world. I myself do not expect much result, but think that a letter can do good. . . .[1]

This English journalist, having received a cheque for £1,000 for this purpose from the Government of the South African Republic,[2] was soon touring the Colony with his "great propaganda." It was at first intended that the views of the Afrikander party, condemning the action of the Cape Government in co-operating with the Imperial Government, and supporting the demand of the Republics for complete independence, should be promulgated at the annual Congress of the Bond on March 8. Schreiner, however, was induced by the High Commissioner to persuade the Bond to postpone the Congress. In return, at the Prime Minister's request, Sir Alfred persuaded the leaders of the Loyalist party to abstain from any public demonstration in support of the policy of H.M. Government. There was, as he put it, a truce of God.

The bargain soon proved to be too one-sided. *Ons Land*, after expressing regret at the postponement of the Congress, where "it would have been the duty of the Afrikander party to express itself in unmistakable terms, in order to maintain its true position and strengthen the hands of its friends in England," suggested that the cause might still be promoted by other means.[3] Propaganda, it was soon perceived, could be carried on at gatherings organized not ostensibly as party demonstrations, but as "conciliation meetings."[4]

Thus the country was disturbed "by a series of meetings," in Sir Alfred's words, "much more mischievous than the regular Bond Congress would have been, though, of course, on the same lines" (p. 100). The truce, thus broken, was at an end. Counter-meetings were held by the Loyalists, to affirm their support of the British Government and the High Commissioner, and to demand the annexation of both Republics.[5] One such meeting, at Claremont, on March 30, was rendered notable by an eloquent declaration by

[1] When confronted with this correspondence by the High Commissioner, the two Ministers concerned denied that Mr. Hargrove had any authority to use their names as he had done, and Mr. Hargrove, after consultation with a mutual friend, wrote a letter in which he explained that Kruger's telegram was written under a misapprehension (Cd. 261, pp. 126–32, 150).

[2] "Concessions Commission Enquiry"; Cd. 624.

[3] Cd. 261, pp. 9, 14, 18–20, 28, 29.

[4] *Ib.* 57–60, 92–4, 138, 147.

[5] Cd. 261, pp. 69–83, 91, 94, 139, 144–7.

(Sir James) Rose Innes. "We do not want to see another war of this kind," he exclaimed, "we do not want to see our sandy plains drenched with the best blood of England and Colonial manhood again, nor to see brave men dying in heaps for what we know is a hopeless ideal. Therefore we say, in Heaven's name, have a settlement, but make no settlement which shall not be calculated to secure a permanent peace."

Extract from Letter. Mr. Lyttelton Gell to Sir A. Milner.

4/5/00. . . . The main thing after all is the state of Public Opinion here and in the Colonies. That represents the generating force for the whole effort, and there is nothing I watch more closely than the pressure in the Steam-gauge. As your own inclination is to dislike *fuss*, let me say that I think the series of Loyalist Meetings in South Africa have been most valuable. Don't discourage or undervalue any demonstrations of that sort, or any expressions of confidence in yourself or Chamberlain. As I reported to you, there was an effort a few weeks ago to undermine your position by representing that you had inevitably excited animosity, and that therefore a new High Commissioner would be desirable when it came to pacification. Those Meetings scotched that idea for the moment; but the pro-Boer tip is to damn you with faint praise, and to play for supplanting you by a weaker and less-experienced man, who can be decoyed into feeble compromise. Far the best answer to this is, that it should be made quite plain to Public Opinion here that such a course would shatter the confidence of the Loyalists. By this stage, the Man in the Street has arrived at a very decided opinion that in any *settlement the Loyalists have to be first considered.* . . . As regards the "steam-gauge" of Public Opinion, I am convinced that the arrest at Bloemfontein, the failure to relieve Mafeking, the publication of the Spion Kop despatches, have chilled it somewhat. I believe also that the weak handling of Rebels, and Roberts's innocent leniency in dealing with the Orange State did further mischief. *The whole Nation has its relatives in the field,* and gets sulky if the Generals sacrifice them and their efforts in misguided leniency. No one asks for capital sentences, but they do cry out for the firmest measures of repression. As I have always maintained, Public Opinion is remarkably set and clear-sighted—never more so. We have 150,000 Special Correspondents writing home to British Electors. . . . There is no hatred or vengefulness. They like the little stories about the kindliness of individual Boers, and are quite ready to shake hands when the battle is over. *But any trifling irritates them.* . . .

In February a manifesto was issued by the leaders of the Dutch Reformed Church, stating that, in their opinion, the war was preventible, and deploring a conflict the effect of which would be felt for years (Cd. 261, pp. 31–41). On the other hand, the High Commissioner, on his return from Bloemfontein in April, was presented with an Address signed by all the Nonconformist Ministers in and around Cape Town, save one. The Address was as welcome as it was significant. For in contrast to the bitter attacks upon the High Commissioner which were emanating from a section of the Nonconformist party in England, these Ministers on the spot assured him not only of their approval of his policy, but also of their deep "feeling of personal affection" for himself.[1] His reply was worthy of the occasion. He spoke with calmness and yet with feeling of the "constant, devoted and forbearing support and confidence," which he had received from all loyal South Africans. He struck a timely note in asserting Great Britain's determination to pursue the struggle until a complete and fair settlement had been achieved, using a phrase which awoke responsive echoes throughout the Empire—two words perhaps suggested by his friend Lyttelton Gell (Ch. II, p. 72)—"Never Again." There was no room for compromise.

Extract from Reply of Sir A. Milner to an Address of Nonconformist Ministers of Cape Town.

12/4/00. . . . As regards myself personally, I cannot but feel it is a great source of strength at a trying time to be assured of the confidence and approval of the men I see before me, and of all whom they represent. You refer to my having to encounter misrepresentation and antagonism. I do not wish to make too much of that. I have no doubt been exposed to much criticism and some abuse. There has, I sometimes think, been an exceptional display of mendacity at my expense. But this is the fate of every public man who is forced by circumstances into a somewhat prominent position in a great crisis. And, after all, praise and blame have a wonderful way of balancing one another, if you only give them time. I remember when I left England for South Africa three years ago, it was amidst a chorus of eulogy so excessive that it made me feel thoroughly uncomfortable. To protest would have been useless; it would only have looked like affectation. So I just placed the surplus praise to my credit, so to speak, as something to live on in the days which I surely knew must come sooner or later,

[1] Cd. 261, pp. 83–5.

if I did my duty, when I would meet with undeserved censure. And certainly I have had to draw on that account rather heavily during the last nine months. But there is still a balance on the right side which, thanks to you and others, is now once more increasing. So I cannot pose as a martyr, and, what is more important, I cannot complain of any want of support. No man, placed as I have been in a position of singular embarrassment, exposed to bitter attacks to which he could not reply, and unable to explain his conduct even to his own friends, has ever had more compensation to be thankful for than I have had in the constant, devoted, forbearing support and confidence of all those South Africans, whether in this Colony, in Natal, or in the Republics, whose sympathy is with the British Empire.

In the concluding paragraph of your address you refer in weighty and well-considered language to the conditions which you deem necessary for the future peace and prosperity of South Africa, and for the ultimate harmony and fusion of its white races. I can only say that I entirely agree with the views expressed in that paragraph. The longer the struggle lasts, the greater the sacrifices which it involves, the stronger must surely be the determination of all of us to achieve a settlement which will render the repetition of this terrible scourge impossible. "*Never again*" must be the motto of all thinking, of all humane men. It is for that reason, not from any lust of conquest, not from any desire to trample on a gallant, if misguided, enemy, that we desire that the settlement shall be no patchwork and no compromise ; that it shall leave no room for misunderstanding, no opportunity for intrigue, for the revival of impossible ambitions, or the accumulation of enormous armaments.

President Kruger has said that he wants no more Conventions, and I entirely agree with him. A compromise of that sort is unfair to everybody. If there is one thing of which, after recent experiences, I am absolutely convinced, it is that the vital interests of all those who live in South Africa, of our present enemies as much as of those who are on our side, demand that there should not be two dissimilar and antagonistic political systems in that which nature and history have irrevocably decided must be one country. To agree to a compromise which would leave any ambiguity on that point would not be magnanimity : it would be weakness, ingratitude, and cruelty—ingratitude to the heroic dead, and cruelty to the unborn generations. But when I say that, do not think that I wish to join in the outcry, at present so prevalent, against the fine old virtue of magnanimity. I believe in it as much as ever I did, and there is plenty of room for it in the South Africa of to-day. We can show it by a frank recognition of what is great and admirable in the character of our enemies ; by not maligning them as a body because

of the sins of the few, or perhaps even of many, individuals. We can show it by not crowing excessively over our victories, and by not thinking evil of everyone who, for one reason or another, is unable to join in our legitimate rejoicings. We can show it by striving to take care that our treatment of those who have been guilty of rebellion, while characterized by a just severity towards the really guilty parties, should be devoid of any spirit of vindictiveness, or of race-prejudice. We can show it, above all, when this dire struggle is over, by proving by our acts that they libelled us who said that we fought for gold or any material advantage, and that the rights and privileges which we have resolutely claimed for ourselves we are prepared freely to extend to others, even to those who have fought against us, whenever they are prepared loyally to accept them.

Shortly afterwards, the Archbishop of Cape Town, in a letter to Sir Alfred, expressed the " views of an overwhelming majority " of English Churchmen in the Colony that " the cause of freedom, righteousness, and progress, as well as of justice to the native races, depends upon the establishment of British rule throughout South Africa " (Cd. 261, p. 94).

In June Sir Alfred forwarded to the Secretary of State reports of the proceedings of the so-called " People's Congress " held at Graaff Reinet, at which Mr. Hargrove spoke at great length against " the howl for annexation," and Mrs. Cronwright (Olive) Schreiner declared that they were gathered together to " give our friends and relations in the Transvaal all the support we can." Sir Alfred's comment was as follows in a despatch which is printed in full in Cd. 261, pp. 183–90 :—

Extract from Despatch. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

6/6/00. . . . I do not know to what extent the " conciliation " movement may have attracted attention in England, but I am bound to inform you that in my judgment, whatever may be the extent of its importance (as to which I do not feel at all sure) it makes for mischief and mischief only. The term " conciliation " is a curious misnomer, inasmuch as the leaders of the movement, with the exception of Mr. Hargrove, are drawn exclusively from the more extreme members of the Afrikander party, while its programme consists of a direct negative to the policy of H.M. Government, and its arguments of abuse of that policy and of all its principal representatives. . . . A very unpleasant and characteristic feature of the conciliation movement is the threat to boycott the English in commercial relations. It is a very ridiculous

threat if it is true. If both races were to indulge in boycotting throughout South Africa it is certainly not the race controlling the principal industry, the whole of the banking and commercial business, and representing nine-tenths of the enterprise of the country, which would get the worst of it. Indeed my fear is much more that the British, especially in the great centres of population, may attempt to retaliate on the threatened boycott, than that the Dutch of the country districts will be able to do much harm to their British neighbours. . . .

It is important to note that, for any exasperation of feeling which may result from the discussion of burning political questions at the present time, the promoters of the "conciliation" movement are solely to blame. Months ago when, early in the present year, the Bond Congress was first mooted, I made strong representations to Mr. Schreiner as to the undesirability of its being held at a time of general public excitement arising from the war. Mr. Schreiner, who entirely agreed with me, while disclaiming any ability to prevent the Congress being held, nevertheless indicated that his own personal influence, for what it was worth, would be exercised against it, and he expressed a strong hope that in that case political meetings on the other side would also not be held. In that view I expressed my full concurrence, and as a matter of fact, when the Bond Congress was, for the time being, abandoned, I succeeded in persuading the leaders of the other party to abstain from any public demonstration of their opinions. There was a truce of God on both sides. Then came the "conciliation" movement, and the country was stirred from end to end by a series of meetings much more violent and mischievous than the regular Bond Congress would have been, though, of course, on the same lines. The truce being thus broken, it would have been useless, and as a matter of fact, I did not attempt to restrain an expression of opinion on the other side. Hence the long series of meetings held in British centres to pronounce in favour of annexing both Republics, and to give cordial support to the policy of H.M. Government and myself personally. On the whole, the utterances at these meetings have been marked by a moderation totally absent in the tone of the conciliators. . . .

One part of the manœuvre for obtaining acceptance of the terms offered by Kruger and Steyn took the shape of an intrigue, which was begun about this time in Europe. The plan was to induce Cecil Rhodes to assist in preserving some degree of independence to the Republics, thus saving the face of the Bond, whilst slapping

that of the Imperial Government and its representatives. Part of the scheme was to sow discord and distrust between Rhodes and Milner. Regarded in the light of subsequent developments, there is more than a little significance in the following account by Mr. Lyttelton Gell of a long conversation with that volatile journalist, Mr. W. T. Stead.

Extract from Letter. Mr. Lyttelton Gell to Sir A. Milner.

23/6/00. . . . Last Monday, lo ! a letter from Stead to say he was in Oxford and wanted to talk on South Africa. . . . He brought his wife and son to luncheon, and talked till 6. . . . He has passed under the sway of Princess Radziwill—as erstwhile under Madame de Novikoff. . . . It became absolutely clear to me as we talked—Stead tells you a good deal in four hours and a half—that she is an active agent in the policy of getting things into a tangle, and as a necessary step of upsetting *you*, and of weaving misunderstandings which may isolate you. She has obviously tried to make Rhodes believe you are animated by jealousy of him. . . . Well, of course she has infatuated Stead, and had obviously succeeded in perplexing his whole mind about you. The theory was that you had become intoxicated with power, that you were intolerant of any rival influence in South Africa (e.g. of Rhodes) ; that you had been wilfully bent on war ; that you had abandoned yourself utterly to the War Party, in particular to [*Fitz*]Patrick, and that you were determined to crush the Dutch under your feet. The second half of the . . . idea is to run Rhodes as a counterweight to you, appealing to his Dutch sympathies, to his fretfulness *re* Downing Street muddling, and so to eliminate once more the Imperial Factor—and emancipate the annexed territory, while still rebel, from the Crown Colony stage. Further, the Hollanders—even Leyds—are to tender their allegiance, and then to become a disintegrating force under Representative Institutions. Behind all there is the idea that Rhodes and the Capitalists may be induced to make a grievance of Rand Taxation. . . . In the end his [Stead's] mind was swung round to the idea that . . . might have lied to him. He even went so far as to say that you had many enemies about you and needed to be very careful. He also mentioned incidentally instances of Rhodes's great loyalty to you. Rhodes had said to him, " I can trust Milner, and am quite ready to go as far as he does." He also told me that on his suggesting to Rhodes that many of the difficulties and complexities which thwarted him were due to his dependence upon Downing Street, and that he ought to go for secession as a step to federation on a looser basis, Rhodes acquiesced in the premise, but said that

immediate advantages must be sacrificed to the dominant idea of Unity. . . .

Luckily, both Milner and Rhodes were much too large-minded to be trapped by mean snares of this kind. They were big enough and honourable enough to be open with each other and devoid of jealousy or resentment, even though they might differ. On learning of the scheme which was on foot, Milner wrote frankly to Rhodes :

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Cecil Rhodes.

28/8/00. [PRIVATE AND PERSONAL] . . . This is a matter on which the evidence I have is beyond question. The game . . . is just the old game, very dear, no doubt, to the foreign enemies of our race and country, of sowing distrust, in order to set up an ultimate split, between you and me. . . . It is a crazy scheme, and it is not from any fear of your lending an ear to it, especially after the generous and consistent support you have shown me through all this trying crisis—and that at a time when my position was much weaker than it is to-day—that I am writing these lines. I am quite easy about the cabal. But I am not quite so happy, in view of the future and of the infinite importance, for public reasons, of a continued good personal understanding and absolute frankness between you and me, about the lies, innuendoes and suggestions which may be poured into your ears in the course of it. No doubt *you escape much, being absent.* But being absent, you may also be bewildered, I will not say misled, by tricks which, if on the spot, you would see through in a moment. Therefore I say to you—precisely as you once said to me—if you are told anything about myself, which implies either that I distrust your co-operation with me, or that I wish to *hamper* your own big work or detract from the influence which you exercise and always must exercise in the development of South Africa—please *do me the justice and the kindness absolutely to disbelieve it.* I don't for the life of me see why we should ever clash, for there is work enough for both of us, in all conscience, in the next year or two, in working out the future of the great British country here, which is going, I trust, not only to federate itself, as a free nation, like Canada and Australia, but to be one of the means of federating the Empire. Of course, we may differ, here and there, as to policy. If so, I am sure we can in the future, as in the past, discuss all differences frankly, and with mutual trust, brushing aside the suspicions and the *arrières pensées* which certain reptiles are never tired of trying to implant in the minds of both of us. I will not now discuss any public questions, though I hope I may have an opportunity of doing so before many months are out. I will only say that *on the big things* I stand in

opinion where I stood when last we met. . . . Every day that passes and everything that turns up, convinces me more than ever of the hopelessness of any half-and-half solution, and that it is only as an integral part of the British Empire, that S. Africa can have either a really free government or a fusion of races. Anything like a compromise, anything that could leave even a chink of hope for the ultimate realization of Dutch nationalist aspirations, would mean eternal discord, and might mean a series of civil wars. . . .

In reply Rhodes wrote from Buluwayo :

Extract from Letter. Cecil Rhodes to Sir A. Milner.

Tuesday [? *September*, 1900]. I am glad you wrote because during the period at Kimberley I used to receive communications as to your jealousy of myself and your wish to get me out of South Africa. I did not believe you were so small a man and knew there was endless work for both of us here, in fact we are alone and want each other, but there is no doubt the endless drip always leaves something. I thought of asking you about it when I left for the north and shewing the letters but having spoken once on the matter I left it alone. . . . I hope to see you at the end of month as I have to be present at league meeting in Capetown. I believe in our having an organization. . . . I think in politics like everywhere else a man will have to be one side or the other. I think also a body like the League might be [? *useful*] in the future and to assist ideas for the closer union of the Empire, and it certainly will be a help to the first step that is the union of the States out here, that is of course when you feel they are ripe for it which all depends on the future conduct of the Dutch and whether we can get any considerable number of our people on the soil. . . .

In spite of all these manœuvres and intrigues, the determination to annex the two Republics enunciated by Lord Salisbury, and acclaimed by the loyalists in South Africa, was confirmed in the great Settlement debate in the House of Commons on July 25, by a majority by 208 against 52.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Rendel.

30/5/00. . . . I got the telegram from the Balliol Dinner and was very pleased indeed. It was very nice of Brodrick to speak so well of me. The fact is the *Under-Secretaries* have largely saved me. Chamberlain, I believe, has stuck to me right through, but, *till I succeeded*, I don't believe there was another Minister who wouldn't have chucked me (I don't say they would have been to blame, for

I did give them a lot to swallow). But *Selborne* and *Brodrick* certainly, and I think also Wyndham, have been " bricks " of the first order right away through. Not that I am out of the wood yet. Not at all. There is a fearful row ahead here over the punishment of the rebels. Of course, the British Public will expect British authority to be vindicated and everybody made happy without anybody being made uncomfortable. . . . And then—there is the Transvaal settlement ! That will be down on my head like a ton of bricks before I am disentangled of my Cape rebels. So, one way and another, I am pretty sure to break my neck over this business yet. But, come what may, *I have saved* the British position in South Africa. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Rendel to Sir A. Milner.

23/6/00. . . . I am sure there is a great deal of truth in what you say about the Under-Secretaries. They have acted, all three, like trumps, throughout. After all, it is something not to be too old to be honest. No one who heard Brodrick at the Balliol dinner could doubt the absolute sincerity of his conviction as to the magnificent way in which you have played your part. But great honour is due to Chamberlain. He has upheld you with a courage and tenacity very rare in public life. . . . You might have gone through your five years or so at the Cape quietly enough, and come back at the end of it with the British position in South Africa not very much worse for wear, if at all, to the English eye, than you found it, and your own reputation as a safe man, warranted to do nothing decisive, comfortably accepted by both parties. You would have known in your heart that you had failed at a big crisis. But it would not have been apparent to anybody else, and when the crash came, five or ten or fifteen years hence, the Courtneys and Morleys and Steads of the day would be saying that if only Alfred Milner had remained at Capetown, the situation would have been saved. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mrs. Montefiore.

12/6/00. I have not written to you for ages and ages, and am almost too tired to hold a pen. But last night, just when I was at my lowest, the mail came in and brought me your delightful letter. It was such a refreshment, just when I was sick with a sordid aftermath of our great struggle, in the shape of a bothering local political crisis, to get your lines, so full of life and interest and affection. What did I ever do to deserve such a friend ? . . . Ever yours in old affection, " The Man of No Illusions." . . .

The reference in the above signature is, no doubt, to a passage in an article by a special correspondent of the *Morning Post* (Mr. Winston Churchill) :

" Only at Government House did I find the Man of No Illusions, the anxious but unwearied Proconsul, understanding the faults and the virtues of both sides, measuring the balance of rights and wrongs, and determined—more determined than ever, for is it not the only hope for the future of South Africa ?—to use his knowledge and his power to strengthen the Imperial ties."

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

1/7/00. . . . Yesterday we had the most tearing ride. Chester, to his great happiness, got the lot of us—Princess Adolphus of Teck, Lady Charles, Mrs. Atherton, Bend'Or, Dudley, Churchill, Frank Rhodes, Miss Struben, and about 6 others—out to Kalabas Kraal, and we ran for 50 minutes on a very hot scent and killed a fox in the open. I say " we " grandly, but as a matter of fact I was perfectly cooked after galloping for half an hour and had to leave the others, or some of them, to finish it. It is a year since I was out, and a year like this seems somewhat to reduce one's physical condition. However, I hope to do better next time, and be in at the death. . . . I hope you got a touching telegram from Clemenceau,[1] which was opened here.

The suppression of the Prieska and Griqualand West risings raised in an acute form the question of the punishment to be meted out to rebels, of whom a very large number were now in the hands of the Imperial authorities. Natal was entirely freed from rebellion. Opinion there was strongly opposed to any promise of lenient treatment (Ch. I, p. 41). But in the Cape Colony, honeycombed with sedition, and with a Ministry controlled by the Bond, the case was different.

The Attorney-General was doubtful as to the legality of civil and military courts existing side by side. Ministers had therefore suggested that all persons arrested under Martial Law should be dealt with by the civil authorities (Nov., 1899). In some cases rebels when captured were sent outside a proclaimed area in order to be tried by the civil authorities. The light sentences they received probably did much to encourage the others.[2]

[1] On the death of Admiral Maxse.

[2] Cf. " *The Times* History of the War in South Africa," VI, p. 550.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

Aliwal North. 26/3/00. . . . The administrative chaos arising from the conflict of civil and military authorities, the latter trying to suppress rebellion, the former to screen rebels, and from the eternal chopping and changing of the military themselves, has at last become so great and so maddening to anybody with an orderly mind, that I have spent the last five days in racing about from one rebel district to another trying to introduce some elements of co-operation, uniformity and system into the jumble. Result *fairly* satisfactory. Everything is still rather at sixes and sevens, but there is at least some beginning of order, and by dint of saying the same thing six times a day, I am getting the Magistrates and Commandants throughout the North East to obtain some glimmering of what they are expected to do and occasionally to pull together. The worst of it is, the lesson I am inculcating is not in itself a very satisfactory one. Our present procedure is an odd mixture of military and civil jurisdiction, without the prompt effectiveness of the former or the unquestionable legality of the latter. The only defence for it is that under the unparalleled and grotesque conditions in which I am placed, I cannot devise, and nobody has yet been able to suggest, anything better.

It would have been far better, had it been possible, to leave the whole dealing with high treason cases, when once the rebellion was suppressed, to the ordinary tribunals, whose action would require no subsequent confirmation. But everybody is agreed that under the present circumstances the ordinary legal procedure would not only be endless, but lead to most unjust and unequal results. In one place no possible jury would convict, in another place the accused would stand no chance of acquittal. Trial by Jury is hopeless for political offences in a country where, for the moment, almost every possible juryman is a violent political partisan. So we are following for the time being the procedure laid down in the Chief of the Staff's circulars of January 30th and February 3rd. The best of this is that as it will take a long time to get through the preliminary investigations, there is plenty of opportunity to consider the vexed question of the best form of tribunal to undertake the final trials. I have my own ideas about this, but for the moment I am trying hard to force the Ministry to face the question and propose something for themselves. My line is this : " What do *you* advise me to do with 3,000 admitted rebels (and 3,000 more at least to come), who have laid down their arms, and especially with some hundred ringleaders (Members of Parliament, Field Cornets, Mayors, and other men of local position) ? It is not enough for you to grumble at Martial Law or preach clemency, and make excuses for treason.

We are showing great clemency to the rank and file, but you surely cannot maintain that we are simply to wipe the slate and let not only the dupes and tools, but the instigators and leaders of rebellion go unpunished. By what means do you suggest arriving at some punishment?" The answer to this question will in all probability split the Ministry. Even if it did not, there are other questions which would be likely to lead to the same result, notably the annexation of the Republics. On this they are hopelessly divided. Two of them have told me independently of one another they want no more "republics." On the other hand the Ministerial press, undoubtedly instigated by some members of the Cabinet, is keeping up a violent agitation in favour of the independence of the Republics. The Prime Minister declines to be drawn one way or the other on the subject. It is impossible to see how the Ministry can be kept together, the members of which hold diametrically opposite views on all the most vital questions of the day.

The situation would be very funny, if it were not so extremely serious. As it is, the prospect of political chaos in the Colony greatly aggravates the difficulty of dealing with the other South African problems before us. Conviction grows in my mind that nothing but the intervention of the Imperial Parliament can provide a way out of the impasse. Legislative sanction is required for acts done under martial law. I do not see how the present Colonial Parliament, as at present composed, can be got to give it. A Statutory condition is urgently required for the trial of rebels. It is very doubtful whether the Colonial Parliament could be induced to pass the necessary Act. If public opinion at home is not yet prepared for interference with the domestic affairs of the Colony,[1] I can only wait patiently till we arrive at that deadlock which I clearly foresee, when the necessity for such interference will become apparent to the most obtuse.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson.

4/5/00. . . . The great crux here is the enormous number of rebels (5,000 at least). We cannot try them all for high treason. As a matter of fact I don't want to try too many. Yet we must do something to them. I would rather leave the country than accept Schreiner's proposal for a general whitewashing. Statutory disfranchisement seems to me a possible—it is so far the only suggested —compromise. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

9/5/00. . . . In the midst of a bewildering mass of business growing daily worse, I snatch time to send you a few lines, ex-

[1] *v.* Ch. II, pp. 56–8.

clusively on all-important points. Everything minor must wait till doomsday. Thank you for Wilson.[1] He is most useful, and, without him, this rebel business could not be dealt with at all. Even as it is, I fear we may come to grief over it. The proportions of the thing are colossal, quite outside my anticipations. In districts like Barkly East and Aliwal all the leading Afrikanders are in it up to the neck. We have already 2–300 ringleaders under arrest, and the number of " rank and file " rebels is several thousand. People scream at me to arrest more, but we have already *too many*. To get legal proof, even before a fairly broadminded Commission, concerning those already arrested, is a huge undertaking requiring a complete Prosecutor's department, and no such thing exists. The Attorney will do his best personally, but the task is entirely beyond the powers of his ordinary staff, and the provincial officials are often hostile or indifferent. The whole power and influence of the Afrikander party is turned on to make the prosecutions a failure. . . .

On receiving from Chamberlain a preliminary announcement of the views of the Home Government upon compensation for loyalists and punishment of rebels, the High Commissioner (April 14) asked his Ministers for a formal expression of opinion. They proposed the establishment of a special tribunal for the trial of " a certain limited number of the principal offenders, and a Proclamation of Amnesty for the rest." [2] In thus advocating clemency to all but the ringleaders, they appealed to the precedent of the Canadian rebellion of 1838. As to that, Chamberlain replied (May 4 and July 26) [3] that the Canadian revolt had taken place during peace, and had arisen out of constitutional grievances which were recognized as legitimate by subsequent legislation. But " in the Cape there has been adhesion to the Queen's enemies, during war, by those who have not even the pretext of any grievance, and who have for a generation enjoyed full constitutional liberty." Moreover, the Canadian rebellion was never formidable ; in the Cape it entailed danger and serious loss. As to the main point at issue, the British people were not vindictive, but they were not prepared to provoke the rankling sense of injustice which would

[1] Sir Harry Wilson (*v.* Ch. I, p. 11), whose legal training and experience as Legal Assistant at the Colonial Office enabled him to take an immense amount of work off the High Commissioner's shoulders. Apart from the drafting of many important documents, notably the Instructions and Letters Patent for the Constitution of the new Colonies, he was responsible for the machinery for the identification and trial of the Cape rebels.

[2] Cd. 264, No. 6.

[3] Cd. 264, No. 10 ; 420, pp. 10–13.

be aroused if rebels were placed in a better position than those who had fought for their Queen and flag.

" Clemency to rebels is a policy which has the hearty sympathy of H.M. Government, but justice to loyalists is an obligation of duty and honour. In the interests of future peace, it is necessary to show that rebellion cannot be indulged in with impunity, and above all that, if unsuccessful, it is not a profitable business for the rebel." He proposed, therefore, that the ringleaders and those who were guilty of outrages, looting, or acts contrary to the usage of civilized warfare, such as the abuse of the white flag, etc., should be tried by a special tribunal, whilst those not guilty of such actions, but of waging war against Her Majesty, or aiding her enemies, should be fined and disfranchised, and those who had acted under compulsion merely disfranchised.

This very moderate proposal did not prove acceptable to the Afrikander Ministry. In fact, as Sir Alfred had foreseen (March 26), this question, combined with the agitation by the Conciliation Meetings for the independence of the Republics, split the Schreiner Ministry.

Every concession, to which the patient arguments and inexorable logic of Sir Alfred forced Schreiner in the direction of co-operation with the Imperial authorities, had widened the breach between him and those of his Ministers who followed the lead of the Afrikander Bond, and the members of Parliament who either sympathized with the Boers or joined them in the field. Sauer, Merriman, and Te Water would abate nothing of their demand for a general amnesty for all rebels except the principal offenders, and trial by jury for them. The view which these Ministers of the Crown took of the crime of rebellion is illuminating. Merriman, the Treasurer, writing in a Minute addressed to the Prime Minister on behalf of Sauer and himself, expressed indignation at being asked to deprive of their civil rights " men, who have, at worst, taken up arms on what they, however erroneously, considered to be a righteous war—a war in which they joined the Queen's enemies to resist what prominent men both here and in England have repeatedly spoken of as a crime." [1]

Dr. Te Water went a step further in his desire to condone rebellion and excuse, if not encourage, rebels. He described them as British subjects of Dutch extraction who had taken up arms, " after vainly endeavouring, by all possible constitutional means,

[1] Cd. 264, p. 41.

to prevent what they, in common with the rest of the civilized world, believe to be an unjust and infamous war against their near kinsmen, and the Republics in the terrible struggle forced upon them." [1]

The remaining half of the Cabinet dissociated themselves from these extreme views. Schreiner, Sir Richard Solomon, and Mr. Herholdt were prepared to adopt a policy which they thought would be in complete accord with that of H.M. Government,[2] prescribing the moderate penalty of five years' disfranchisement for the ordinary rebels.

Inquiries were cabled home by the High Commissioner at the request of Ministers as to whether the disfranchisement proposed was for life, and again whether H.M. Government adhered to the views expressed on May 4. Chamberlain replied (June 10) that they held that the policy suggested should be substantially adhered to, and that if offenders convicted of high treason were spared the other and severer penalties of high treason, justice seemed to demand that they should suffer the full political penalty. "Disfranchisement for life did not seem to H.M. Government to be a very severe punishment for rebellion."

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

6/6/00. . . . The rush here is something awful, an acute local political crisis coinciding with the breakdown of the Republics, the starting of innumerable questions about the administration of the conquered territories and a frenzied rush on the part of the refugees to get home, which must be resisted. The long inevitable delay in dealing with the rebels and the consequent protraction of the period of Martial Law also bring many and puzzling problems with them. . . . You must have wondered, what has become of all the questions such as compensation, special Commission for Rebels, etc., which appeared so urgent as long as two months ago and are still absolutely unsettled. The delay is due to the paralysis of the Ministry which is hopelessly divided. This state of things, which is intensely trying, must shortly come to an end. I have stuck to the position that Ministers must find a way out, at any rate as far as the punishment of the rebels is concerned, and a way that H.M.G. can be reasonably expected to approve of. I do not feel confident that those of them who are more or less willing to do this will be able to obtain a sufficient amount of support from their own party. Schreiner has rather disappointed me. He clings

[1] Cd. 264, p. 41. [2] Memorandum by Mr. Schreiner, June 11.

so desperately to the hope of keeping his followers together. If he were to take a stronger line with them, he would carry a small section with him and then with the aid of the whole Opposition, carry his Bills. As it is he runs the risk of falling between two stools. There is a meeting of the Ministerial party the day after to-morrow. That must settle something. . . .

The division in the Cabinet proved fundamental. On June 11 Schreiner informed the High Commissioner that their differences could not be composed. Two days later he resigned. On the 18th a Progressive Ministry was formed. Sir Gordon Sprigg came back to office. His ministry, consisting of Sir P. Faure, (Sir) John Frost, T. Graham, Dr. Smartt, with (Sir) James Rose Innes as Attorney-General, could count on the support of Schreiner, Solomon, Herholdt, and some other members of the Afrikander party. The High Commissioner could now feel that measures necessary for the prosecution of the war would no longer be hindered by his Constitutional advisers in the Cape Colony.

Before the publication of a Proclamation (June 1), summoning Parliament to meet on the 22nd, Sir Gordon had pressed the Governor to obtain from Schreiner an assurance that his government would introduce a bill for the appointment of a special Judicial Commission and for the punishment of rebels, or failing that to demand his resignation. In characteristic terms, Sir Gordon assured Sir Alfred that he was not anxious to assume office, but was ready to do so if the interests of the country demanded it, and if by that means a withdrawal of the Constitution could be avoided. It was true that he had just completed his seventieth year. But that was the age of Palmerston when he first became Prime Minister, and nearly that of Gladstone when he began his Midlothian campaign (Milner Papers, XXVII, iii, 423). Sir Gordon now passed an Indemnity and Special Tribunals Act similar to that which Schreiner had contemplated, and which Chamberlain had informed the High Commissioner the Home Government would accept as meeting the wishes of the loyal majority (July 26, Cd. 420, pp. 10 ff.).

Extract from Telegram. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

9/7/00. [MOST URGENT] As regards views and intentions of present Ministry, Prime Minister refers me to Bill just prepared which will be introduced at beginning of session. 1. Provides indemnity for acts done under Martial Law. 2. Establishes and defines powers of Special Court of three Judges, " two Supreme Court

Judges and one barrister of not less than ten years standing," to try cases in which Attorney-General may decide to indict for high treason. 3. Establishes and defines powers of Special Commission of six members, " two of whom must be barristers," to deal with rebels not so indicted, and to punish all found guilty with disfranchisement for five years from the date of conviction. 4. Legalizes Compensation Commission and defines its powers. . . .

With reference to the existing Compensation Commission, legalized by this Act, Sprigg's Government opposed a subsequent motion for a select Committee on the working of Martial Law. They were forced, however, to appoint a Commission of three to report upon losses sustained through the administration of Martial Law, with a view to compensation (Sept. 5). Sir Alfred (Sept. 17), after making some suggestions to prevent overlapping with the Commission already appointed, reminded Ministers that the Imperial Government had only undertaken " to exact compensation for actual injury to property of individuals who remain loyal." Losses sustained by rebels, therefore, if admitted, would have to be provided from other sources (Cd. 420, pp. 88–91).

Finally, the Indemnity Act was promulgated on October 12. Opposition to it had been fierce and bitter. The patent disloyalty of Afrikander members even permitted them to speak in Parliament of Boer successes as " our " victories.[1] Such expressions, added to the *réclame* of De Wet's tactics, to the propaganda of the " conciliation " meetings, and presently to a campaign of slanderous abuse of British troops by the Dutch Press,[2] had the natural result of working up the rebellious spirit of the Dutch population to fever heat.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Fiddes.[3]

25/6/00. . . . As regards the crisis in the Colony, I daresay you guessed what happened. Schreiner at the last moment could not rise at a fence. He took a very courageous, very conscientious, and very correct line. But he was too divided in his own mind, and too anxious not wholly to break with his own followers, to carry any large body of them with him. With the absolutely unscrupulous and uncompromising people on the other side, his line was too moderate. I think on the whole, he is not sorry to be out of it. But I am sorry to lose him, as I don't feel absolutely certain that

[1] Worsfold, W. B., " Lord Milner's Work in South Africa," p. 396.

[2] Cd. 547. Actually British and Colonial troops and their leaders showed extraordinary forbearance and humanity to the Boers.

[3] Then adviser to Lord Roberts at Pretoria.

the new Ministry will now be able to attach sufficient of the other side to carry their measures. If not, we shall be in Queer Street. But as far as I am concerned, I am absolutely determined under no circumstances whatever to give in about this business, and if I don't weaken I don't see how H.M. Government can. They wouldn't care to have me back at 47 Duke Street, St. James's, though I should like nothing better in the world. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Edmund Garrett.

15/7/00. . . . At one time Fate seemed to take a malignant pleasure in hitting me over the head, and certainly no blow was harder or has left more permanent ill-effects than the breakdown of your health. I wish that I could count even now upon having you back soon. . . . The Boers die hard, and what is worse, have never been properly beaten. Their skill, and their *absence of heroism* (for, with all their splendid fighting gifts they are *not* heroes) will probably preserve them from that to the last. Still, I have not much anxiety for the Republics, assuming, as I do, that we shall have the power in our hands, and can *shape* the future. My anxiety is still for the Colony (it always *was* the worst feature of the whole business) when, with "responsible Government" much too soon bestowed, and *no Progressive leader worth a dam* (Rhodes being unfitted for local party politics), things may continue to go wrong. I seriously considered whether, under these circumstances, I ought not to stay here myself, but am finally quite satisfied that, important as the Cape is, it is more important to *shape the new Transvaal*, and that I can do ten times as much in the latter field *with full powers*, as I could here, under the galling limitations of the system. Of course the Home Government ought to have taken the bull by the horns and suspended our blessed old Constitution for five years. The task of building up a South African Federation would have thus been immensely simplified.

But really one must not ask too much of Cabinets. This one has done a lot and at *that* point its stock of original energy and power of bold departure from dawdledom was exhausted. So here I am, illustrating a great doctrine of my own, first enunciated with regard to Cromer: "Achieve the difficult, and your reward will be to be asked to attempt the impossible." And it *is* the impossible, to pass adequate measures to punish past and prevent future rebellion with a majority of rebels against you in an Omnipotent Chamber. Therefore, breakdown may be very near, and I am not sure it would not be best. Alas! I fear you over-estimate my success with Schreiner. I have wrestled with the devil for the Soul of that Man for say—on the average—an hour a day

for a twelvemonth (all through a period of quite indescribable overwork and a griping anxiety, with all the most serious decisions in civil government—martial law, disarmament, etc.—and many military on my hands), I wrestled *patiently*, listening to interminable sermons gradually modifying their tone. *Only three times* did I quite lose my temper. But in the end I am only left with about two-thirds of it (the Soul, I mean). . . . I agree, a thousand times, *with all you say about Fitzpatrick*. Head very good, heart golden—a remarkable combination.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

4/7/00. . . . The political horizon in the Colony is not clearing. As I said last week there is not much more that I can do. I shall do my best to keep a hold on Schreiner, as if he breaks loose I don't see how we can save the situation on constitutional lines. But he is very difficult to guide, and would be absolutely uncontrollable if he thought I was trying to run him. The Bond people know his character well, and are playing him with great skill. They mourn over him in affectionate sorrow, but are wise enough not to attack him. They only criticize, delicately, cleverly, his conciliatoriness which might be mistaken for " subservience " to the Imperial Govt. and to me, and appeal to his loyalty to his old associates. Of course they know that Schreiner will not stultify himself by taking their side against the Government, when it proposes the very measure he himself advocates. But they are carefully angling for his support on other large issues, such as the anti-annexation movement, on which Schreiner holds most tenaciously a view of his own unshared by anyone else in S.A., which on a division might take him into their lobby. On the whole I don't see how the Govt. can possibly get through the session without being beaten on some important division, and, though some new combination may in that case still be possible—to avoid a Bond Ministry, which under the circumstances could not be tolerated—I think it is more likely that we shall be driven to keeping in office the present Govnt., with all the difficulties about supply, etc., which the fact of the Govt. being in a minority in the Lower House would involve. My own view is that it would be better to do this, i.e. to carry on Govnt. virtually in violation of constitutional principles, on the plea of absolute necessity, than either to hold a general election with some districts under martial law, or formally to suspend the constitution, seeing all the parliamentary bother at home which this would involve. I should, however, be very glad to have your views as to this, as though I hope we may not come to such an impasse, it would be as well to know beforehand what line to take,

if a deadlock did arise. I hope your health is standing the great strain which we must be putting on it. And China too![1] Truly it is a case of "uneasy lies the head" for the rulers of England just now.

The following survey of the situation was intended for the eye of King Edward VII, then Prince of Wales:

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Sir Edward Hamilton.[2]

24/6/00. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . The position here is so interesting, and so important, for the whole future of the Empire, that a survey of it may be useful. The struggle has been severer, and for a long time more critical, than any of us foresaw (though I always took a much graver view of it than others) and the world at large will never know quite all the risk we ran. Even now, the war is, in my opinion, not over. The very rapidity of Roberts's movements, which was necessary, and really saved the situation, involved a certain amount of incompleteness. In conquering an enormous country, he was quite right to seize, by daring rushes, the principal strongholds of the enemy. But in doing so he inevitably left portions of the enemy, still unbeaten, to right and left, and the work of hunting them out, in their remote fastnesses, and preventing their attacks upon our line of communications of enormous length, is a difficult and a protracted one. We shall do it, of course. And then comes the question, how shall we use our opportunity? We can make South Africa British now, if we set the right way to work about it, and there is no sentimental folly at home. There are two quite separate problems, though they must be dealt with together as part of a whole. One is to start the conquered countries on right lines; the other to break up the rebel party in the Cape Colony. With regard to the ex-Republics, there is nothing for it, in the first instance, but a paternal despotism. Time must be given to allow the country to settle down, and a British population to return, or to immigrate, before people are once more plunged into politics. And this will not be so difficult, for there will be so much for everybody to do in restarting business, in repairing existing mines and opening new ones, and in developing the resources of the country in many ways, hitherto obstructed by bad government, that nobody will trouble much about politics, unless artificially stimulated by the premature grant of self-government. All they will want is an honest and progressive administration, and that ought to be assured, provided the country is not loaded up at

[1] The "Boxer" Rebellion.

[2] Permanent Under-Secretary of the Treasury.

starting with so heavy a debt, in the shape of a war indemnity, as to prevent the Government being made thoroughly efficient, and having some means in hand to develop the country—as, for instance, by an extension of railways.

The Kruger gang, and the Hollanders, are thoroughly discredited, and everybody will be glad to be rid of them. But we must, of course, take care not to let the government get too much under the influence of the mining group, and to ensure from the first the co-operation of the more honest and progressive Boers in the management of the rural districts. A great deal will depend upon the introduction of British settlers of the right type. Artisans, miners and traders will come of their own accord, and in abundance, but we want also a leaven of British settlers in the country. These are less easy to find and to attract, as it needs a good knowledge of farming, a readiness to rough it, and some capital, to make agriculture a success under the difficult conditions prevalent in South Africa. Canadians, Australians, possibly some of the Yeomanry, would make suitable settlers for this purpose, and it should be our object to keep a considerable number of them in this country, when the war is over, especially if they are married men. It is not an easy thing to arrange, but unless financial difficulties are allowed to stand in the way, something substantial might be done in this direction.

The future in the Cape Colony is at present very clouded. The Dutch are intensely bitter about the war and the defeat of the Republics, with whom nine-tenths of them sympathized and for whom about one-fifth of them actually took up arms. The extent of the Colonial rebellion is hardly as yet realized in England (there were at least 10,000 rebels in the Colony itself, to say nothing of two or three thousand who went over to the Transvaal just before the war, in order to fight against us). It is true that there is also a party among the Dutch, embracing especially a number of the more substantial farmers, who are sick of the whole business, and who, being well off, and quite satisfied under British rule, would be only too glad to live at peace with all men. But they have not much moral courage, and cannot resist the tide of racial and religious prejudice, which is the stock-in-trade of the Bond, and which is sedulously kept up by the Dutch press and the Dutch parsons. The pernicious influence of these two bodies is heightened by the fact that the bulk of the Dutch population are ignorant of the English language, and therefore entirely under the influence of those who can address them in their own tongue. It is the game of the Bond to keep up racial bitterness in order to cement its followers, and control a majority in Parliament. Were it not for the existence of Constitutional government (which was granted to

the Cape 50 years too soon) the agitation would die out, and the two races would gradually live together in harmony. Under the present system, which aggravates the race split by making it also the dividing line of political parties, it will take much longer to get over the feud between Dutch and English. As a leading Dutch farmer, who hates it, said to me the other day, " if only the Constitution could be suspended for 5 years, we should have peace in the country in six months."

The next best thing to suspending the constitution altogether, is to disfranchise the rebels. Without the votes at the polls of the men who have been fighting against us, the Bond party would be in a minority in both Houses at the next election. But at present they are in a majority in the Lower House, and unless a certain number of Bond members can be detached from their party to vote with the present Progressive (i.e. Pro-British) Ministry, the necessary measures for dealing with the rebels, including disfranchisement of the rank and file, cannot be passed. I foresee a tough struggle over this in the immediate future. In case the present Ministry cannot get a majority they will have to worry on somehow without one. The alternative, a Ministry owing its parliamentary majority to the rebel vote, could not be tolerated at any time, much less at this critical moment in the history of South Africa. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir Francis Knollys to Sir A. Milner.

Marlborough House. 20/7/00. . . . Sir E. Hamilton has sent the Prince of Wales a copy of your letter to him. H.R.H. desires me to let you know that he has been extremely interested by it, and that as far as he is able to judge you have taken a very just view of the situation and of the remedies (especially that of suspending the Constitution or of disfranchising the Rebels) which you consider should be applied to amend it. He feels very much for you in all that you have gone through during the last 12 months—the worries, the anxieties and your tremendous responsibilities. He hopes and believes, however, that you have been well and loyally supported by the Government at home, without which you could not have gone on. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir E. Hamilton to Sir A. Milner.

—/7/00. . . . I don't think you need be the least afraid of the judgment formed of you and your policy by your friends—at any rate of those whose opinion you are the least likely to value. I own myself that when the war broke out, I often thought that, if this or that had been done or said, it might have been avoided.

But I now am completely convinced that it was inevitable ; that you exhibited the greatest patience with the Republics ; that they were absolutely bent on trying conclusions with us sooner or later ; and that, had it been later, and at a time less favourable to us, we should have run the very gravest risk—and it even was a grave one as events have proved—of losing part of South Africa. I think you have emerged from the crisis with the highest credit ; and that the desire (if any) to get rid of you at the Cape is confined to very few—to a section not more numerous than the " little Englanders." They are I believe a negligible quantity ; and I am sure that the balance of opinion is strongly in favour of backing you up through thick and thin, and of doing what you on the spot recommend to be done. Half of our troubles in distant parts comes from persistent disregard of the advice of those most competent to form a proper judgment, and from fear of a few unreasonable and sentimental beings in the House of Commons—a fear which the present Government, despite its huge majority, indulges in with special freedom. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lord Roberts.

30/7/00. . . . We have had no messengers down from the front for some days, and there is a fearful accumulation of papers of all sorts for head-quarters. I am sending Lord Algernon Gordon-Lennox down with them.[1] He has been helping in this office—a pure volunteer—for months, and I am glad of an opportunity of letting him see what is going on at the front. It is really very kind, the way in which people slave for one in these days for nothing. If it had not been for the amount of volunteer assistance in this office since October last, we should all be in our graves. I am hoping that Prinsloo's surrender may be the beginning of the end, at least as far as the Orange River Colony is concerned, and may somewhat lessen your great anxieties. I do not anticipate a very speedy end to resistance, but it seems to me that, if once the Orange River Colony is cleared and we command the two routes to Pretoria beyond fear of interruption, the back of the war will be finally broken. I suppose we must be prepared for a lingering resistance in the north and north-east, and perhaps for sporadic risings elsewhere in the Transvaal for some time.

The strain in the Colony has latterly been very great—in two directions. In the first place the Dutch have been once more excited to fever pitch by the successes of De Wet, and even

[1] The train was held up and looted by Commandant Theron with a band of foreign volunteers near Kroonstad, but Lord Algernon managed to save the despatches by a ruse (Milner Papers, XXVII, iv, 281).

more, I think, by the violent agitation in the Colony for what is known as a "conciliatory" policy, or in other words a blank surrender, *after victory* (!) to enemies and rebels. At this moment the Cape House is busy debating a resolution against Martial Law, which, in spite of the opposition of Ministers, is likely to be carried, and I look upon a constitutional crisis of a grave character as imminent, though it may possibly be avoided. The bare-faced treasonableness of the Bond party is something almost incredible—at the very moment when some people in England are still gushing about "the loyalty of the Cape Dutch." Really, there is some excuse for these people thinking us such unutterable idiots, that there is no "try on" too extreme for us. The other direction, in which I am greatly tried, is the impatience of the exiles to get back to the Transvaal. Relief funds are exhausted, and the savings of the smaller people, too, for the most part. They were, of course, very sanguine, when Pretoria fell, that all was over, though personally I did my best to point out to them, that this was unreasonable, and that they ought to be too grateful that everything had been saved by your rapid advance to grumble at having to wait till what had been *won* by a sudden dash should be *secured* by operations which must necessarily take longer. . . . However, I feel that in this matter you can alone judge, and I shall simply back everything you ordain and make the best of it to the people here. All I ask is to have early notice of the approach of the time when people may return, as we have spent an immense amount of time and labour here in taking the names of, and classifying, all persons having a good claim to go back as soon as possible, and if I only know in time what numbers can be admitted at what dates, I shall be able to see that there is no confusion and that they go back in something like order of merit, or rather order of general usefulness. . . .

On August 14 and September 5, Sir Alfred forwarded to the Secretary of State a batch of evidence as to the numbers who, willingly or unwillingly, joined the enemy during the recent rebellion in the Colony, measures taken against loyalists, and commandeering of persons or property. These are set out in Cd. 420, pp. 26–73, 79–87. Sir Alfred, in analysing the evidence submitted, made some significant deductions:

Extract from Despatch. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

14/8/00. . . . The evidence, with which these reports abound, of the active and prominent part taken by the rebels themselves in commandeering, in attacks upon loyalists, and in the establish-

ment of Republican Government in their districts, is of special importance at the present time, in view of the persistent assertion of the apologists of rebellion that the Colonists were compelled to rise in arms against their Sovereign. That a certain number of people did take up arms under compulsion is no doubt true, but the compulsion itself was applied in most cases, not by the invaders, but by their fellow Colonists, the bulk of whom were keenly sympathetic with the cause of the Republics, and some of whom at least were directly responsible for the invasion. Nothing can be clearer than that the compulsion was in many cases used as a cloak to protect those who were willing enough to join the enemy, but feared the possible consequences. The invaders themselves had little belief in, and little desire for, compulsory allies. They commandeered in order to give disaffected British subjects an excuse for joining, and rarely pressed home the compulsion where they found that it was not welcome. . . . But the reports show something more than that many leading men in the invaded districts take an active part in the rebellion, and that the bulk of the Dutch-speaking population in those districts readily threw in their lot with it. They show that in some cases at any rate, perhaps in all, the invasion was made in direct response to invitations from this side. . . .

Extract from Despatch. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

5/9/00. . . . A great deal has been said by the Opposition Members during the recent debates in the House of Assembly with the object of proving that the adherence of the rebels in this Colony to the Queen's enemies was due to compulsion, and that consequently they cannot be held either legally or morally responsible for their action in taking up arms. The question as to the nature of the compulsion which can be regarded in law as absolving an alleged rebel from his duty to his Sovereign has been recently dealt with in the Supreme Court by Mr. Justice Maasdorp.[1] . . . The Judge said " the fact that the enemy were in possession of Douglas did not change the prisoner's nationality, and his allegiance to his own country still remained. He never became a subject of the Free State, and not being so, could not—according to all the rules of the comity of nations—be forced to take up arms, and if he did so, he would be guilty of high treason unless his life was threatened." . . . In the debate on the second reading of the Indemnity and Special Tribunals Bill, Mr. Wessels, one of the members for Vryburg, and himself an official of the Afrikander Bond, created some sensation by stating that sixty-five per cent. of his constituents, almost all

[1] Hon. C. G. Maasdorp, Puisne Judge of Supreme Court, Cape Colony.

of whom went into rebellion, did so of their own accord, and had not even a commandeering note to show by way of excuse for their conduct. He added that what surprised him, as an eye-witness, was the eagerness of the border Colonists to join the invaders. . . .

Whilst so much space is necessarily devoted to the behaviour and treatment of rebels, it must not be forgotten that there was a large and distinguished body of Dutch Colonists whose loyalty to the British Empire was deep and sincere. Many of them had from the first detested the machinations of the Bond; many of them fought and died side by side with the British.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

22/8/00. . . . The position here continues intensely unsatisfactory. The Bond in Parliament are just as aggressive as ever—indeed, the way they carry the war into our country is truly admirable. They have the most hopeless case, having been thoroughly shown up by the rebellion—shown up to an extent which makes the impartial stranger *gape with wonder* at their being allowed to go on at all. . . . The situation is, of course, immensely complicated by Schreiner's attitude. He wants the Government to survive the session and to carry their Bill, to which, in general, he has given his blessing. But he is quite ready, indeed I think anxious, to knock all the substance out of it, and virtually to get the rebels off with an admonition, in order to recover his ground with his old followers. Our only strong card is Innes. . . . He is steeped in the old doctrine that you must always give way to the Dutch. But he has an essentially *honest mind*. The "lie in the soul" can effect no lodgement in his clear intellect and absolutely sincere nature. . . . It will be with an anxious mind that I shall leave Cape Town just now, though I don't really see that I can do much more with the Parliamentary situation at present. I am sure no man ever *tried* harder to make bricks without straw. And I continue to feel the extreme urgency of taking things in hand in the new territories. Up there matters continue to go badly.

The prolongation of the war, which is a great disappointment (I certainly always hoped that this winter would finish it), is necessarily creating new difficulties. The greatest of these is the continuance of purely military government. Last week I hoped that, as regards the Orange River Colony, at any rate, this might be almost over. Now, with the reappearance of guerilla bands between Kroonstad and Senekal, I am again doubtful. Moreover the last few weeks have witnessed, what from the political point of view is perhaps the most unfortunate incident of the last

six months, the complete relapse of the South-West Transvaal. The whole of the country west of the Rand right up to the Colonial border has once more slipped out of our hands—of course with deplorable consequences, as regards those who had submitted. The fact that we cannot keep what we have overrun, naturally destroys confidence and prevents adhesions to our side, which would be numerous, if the Boers believed we were able to protect those who had accepted our authority.

No doubt the military problem is a very difficult one. No precedents apply. It is not surprising that we have been bewildered by circumstances so extraordinary, have been alternately too lenient and too harsh, and have succeeded neither in winning over the Boers nor in adequately frightening them. However, I believe that we are now settling down—at least I hope so, to a more consistent line, and that we have made up our minds to face the ugly fact that till any one of the enemy is dead or imprisoned or absolutely crippled by want of a gun, a horse and food, he remains a *potential* soldier, whatever oaths he may have taken or guarantees he may apparently have given. The process of complete subjugation may be slow. Meanwhile I think we should do well to establish regular civil government, even while the war continues. I can even conceive it possible that we might restart the Transvaal as a place of business, before the outlying Districts were completely subjugated.

If we can once confine resistance to a definite area—even a wide one—sufficiently removed from the centres of industry, it will die of itself. The great point now, from a military point of view, seems to be to stamp out rebellion along the lines of communication and in the country already occupied. By the time this letter reaches you, I hope I may have started for Bloemfontein, if the fates are favourable. . . . In the meantime I do what I can to keep the military administration of the occupied Districts on reasonable lines, and Fiddes at Pretoria is of great assistance to me. . . . Lord Roberts always shows consideration for my difficulties. But he is fully occupied with the conduct of six separate little campaigns. Owing to that, and to the constant interruption of communications, it is difficult to exchange views with him, and he has no adequate control of his subordinates in regard to civil administration. The result is necessarily unsatisfactory. There is no regular system. The abler men are paralysed for want of a clear lead ; the less able do absurd things, which excite needless resentment and make us look ridiculous. But it is no use grumbling about the inevitable.

These are the necessary consequences of the protraction of the struggle and the consequent protraction of military Government, with which we are all increasingly dissatisfied with every week that

passes. The mess to be ultimately cleared up will be so much the greater. Still I am not despondent. The recuperative powers of the country are great, and, when once we can set people to work again, many grievances and enmities, which are now extremely acute and desperately difficult to deal with, will be smothered in the rush to profit by the new opportunities. . . .

I sincerely hope that a general election may not be far distant. If it were to result, as I believe it must, in a public vote of confidence in your South African policy, it would do more than anything else to clear the air here and lighten the task of reconstruction. Indeed, I feel the job before us is such a heavy one, that without the assured support of the British people, nobody can carry it to a successful issue. I should be sorry to have to begin with the danger of any "wobble" at home hanging over my head. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir A. Milner.

10/9/00. . . . I have duly received your interesting private letter of Aug. 22. . . . Are you not a little too pessimistic with regard to the condition of affairs at the Cape? Of course we have always taken into account the character of colonial politics. We know how thoroughly disloyal many of the Africanders are, and how weak and unreasonable are many of our own friends. Under all the circumstances I think that the success of the Government is quite as satisfactory as we could possibly have hoped for. I do not gather that the Treason Bill has been weakened, although it was from its first inception very little better than a general indication that treason was punishable. The virulent opposition of the Bond will, however, make the Treason Bill a triumph for its supporters, and to that extent may weaken the Bond as a political party. But, after all, nothing can alter the permanent facts of the situation which dominate the politics of the Colony, namely, the existence of a Dutch majority largely consisting of persons disloyal to our rule. We have to lie on the bed which our predecessors made for us.

The more I think of it, the more I doubt whether the present or any House of Commons would ever consent to take away a Colonial constitution once given, without at least the absolute proof of a widespread and dangerous conspiracy. Although this may be said to exist, in effect, at the Cape, we have no such evidence as would justify us in putting the conspirators on their trial; and, as we should be opposed by many, if not all, of the Progressives, as well as by the Bond, and should have against us the general feeling of every self-governing Colony, I can hardly conceive the possibility of carrying a measure in face of such opposition. There-

fore, we have to get on as best we can, and I can only congratulate you on the way in which you have hitherto managed this most difficult situation. . . .

. . . I am glad to see that Solomon and Rose Innes are behaving so well. Schreiner's action does not surprise me. I am afraid we shall never be able to count upon him as a loyal assistant. He would rather be friends with the Bond than with us. We ought to have earned his gratitude by suppressing his letters. . . . I look forward to the time when you are able to take up your work in the new Colonies. I agree in your estimate of military administration, and have been greatly disappointed at the delay due to the slow progress of the war. The difficulty is of course chiefly the size of the country, and it is not for a layman to criticize military measures, but I should have thought that it ought to be possible to establish, if not now, at all events at an early date, a military police, something like the Royal Irish Constabulary, and to echelon these along the lines of communication with instructions to make each post an impregnable position by earth works, etc., in which anything from 200 to 500 men might hold their own against all comers for a sufficient time to make certain reinforcements if necessary. Such posts should be fully provisioned for at least three months, with ample supplies of ammunition. The troops should be well horsed and should patrol the lines both ways up to the limits of the next posts. They should inflict summary punishment on any district in which the line is interfered with or destroyed. In addition, of course, the principal towns would also be fortified against attack. This would only leave the open country inhabited almost entirely by the Dutch Boers. What they did there would not matter much, and necessity would force them, I think, to settle down speedily. But probably this idea is wildly imaginative, and meanwhile guerilla warfare goes gaily on. The latest news seems to show that anything like an organized force will disappear before many days are over.

I am strongly inclined to agree with you that a beginning should be made at the earliest possible moment to restore the Transvaal, and especially the Rand, as a place of business. The mere fact that tens of thousands of Englishmen will then take up their residence—all I hope with arms in their hands and able to use them if necessary—will have a quieting effect upon the Boers. . . . We are very anxious to see the return of a very considerable part of the regular army. You can well imagine that we have not been without anxiety in the troubled state of international politics while we have 200,000 men abroad under a system which was not contemplated to allow of more than two Army corps being sent out of the country. We are still uncertain about the general

election, but, if it comes, as it ought to do, in the course of the next two or three weeks, I believe there is no doubt whatever about the result. In reading your recent despatches with the private accounts given by agents of the state of things in the disaffected districts in the Colony I am struck by the number of officials, magistrates and others who are reported as favourable to the rebels or actively disloyal. I assume that you have this matter in hand, and I hope that you will have no difficulty in pressing upon your Government the necessity of dealing with this matter while they are still in office. They ought certainly, in any case in which they have evidence to show disloyal feeling on the part of an official, to substitute someone in whom they can fully trust. Otherwise their own salaried officers will be their worst enemies. A few judicious changes would probably give the cue in many other cases, and would show such persons that it would pay them better to give evidence of loyalty than to be directly or indirectly supporting the anti-British policy.

The General Election.

A General Election at home was, in fact, held in October, largely owing to the insistence of Chamberlain, who had, indeed, wished to appeal to the country in June. The policy of the Government was now endorsed by a Unionist majority of 134. Mr. Goschen then retired to the House of Lords, and Lord Selborne took Goschen's place at the Admiralty. In the new Government Lord Lansdowne went to the Foreign Office in place of Lord Salisbury, being succeeded at the War Office by St. John Brodrick (Lord Midleton).

Extract from Letter. Sir Henry Norman to Sir A. Milner.

28/6/00. . . . Chamberlain and his set—the more energetic members of the Government, like Carson—are doing all they know for a dissolution. Salisbury, Balfour, and Hicks Beach are opposed to it. . . . A fortnight ago a dissolution this year was a certainty. The terrible China business may postpone it indefinitely. . . . A month ago a tremendous Conservative majority was also a certainty. To-day the Government are losing ground, Roberts's quiescence, the successful guerilla work of the Boers, the natural abatement of the war fever, the China muddle (the direct outcome of their diplomacy), the awful revelations of *The Times* about the hospitals in South Africa . . . the Government action about certain domestic questions, Temperance, for instance, and the revival of the Ritualist controversy, destined to play a large rôle in the

contest—all these are weakening the Government's prospects. But they are still sure of a sweeping victory—if *Rosebery keeps out of it.* If he takes the field, they will get a majority of 40 ; if he doesn't, of 140. . . . C.B. is leading us no whither and the party is not gathering around him. This is a good story. A man in the Club Smoking-room reads from the paper : " Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman arrived in Paris this morning." " Did they," asked another man, " er—travel together ? " The vast majority of the Liberal party are quite sound upon the war, and feel towards yourself as they have always done, combined with great sympathy for the huge burden you have been carrying. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Sir Henry Norman.

20/8/00. . . . I am naturally very anxious about the coming election, for South African reasons. Without forgetting the wider interests of the Empire, which are all I care for, it is impossible for me just now to grasp or to care for anything that does not lie between Cape Town and the Zambesi. It is not that I regard my own brigade as the whole army, or the particular position I am trying to hold as the key to the whole field of battle, but at any rate it is an important one, sufficient for the nonce to absorb all my efforts and energies. What I ask about the coming election is : will it strengthen the position here ? Just now, it happens to be of supreme importance that people here should be convinced that we are going through with the South African settlement on the lines already laid down. If the result of the election is to strengthen that conviction, victory is assured and the ultimate settlement easier than most people now think. But any encouragement to people, whose only hope, but a very strong and vivid hope, at the present moment, is in the changeableness of English opinion, may ruin everything. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir A. Milner.

23/7/00. . . . The Opposition here, although quiet, are not content, and are waiting for the least chance of giving trouble. The Liberal Imperialists are very few, and when they have been used for the General Election they will probably be thrown aside by the Campbell-Bannerman party. I think, between ourselves, that a General Election here is quite likely in the early autumn. I wish it could have been taken a month ago. I do not feel inclined to undertake the responsibility of a settlement which must raise an immedate number of difficult questions without a popular mandate which will strengthen the hands of the Government. If we get this, and the Bond try us too hardly, we may perhaps

find it possible to deal with them in a way which certainly could not be attempted under existing circumstances. The crisis in China and the possibilities of further trouble in Ashanti and elsewhere in West Africa complicate the situation, and make possible the realization of what has always been my greatest fear—that public attention should be diverted from what is really the main and simple issue of the South African war and the settlement which is to follow it. On the latter point we can, I believe, rely upon success, but I dread the opening up of minor issues and the confusion which might follow. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. St. John Brodrick (Lord Midleton) to Sir A. Milner.

27/7/00. . . . I have refrained from writing because I thought you would feel bound to reply, and perhaps no one here has realized so fully as I how terribly you have been worked, and how splendidly you have realized the reward due to "him who overcometh." I assure you, if even in the remotest way I have been able to help, I esteem it an honour to have had a share. . . . I can only say in these last seven weeks I have been stimulated by your example. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. R. B. (Lord) Haldane to Sir A. Milner.

31/7/00. . . . Chamberlain read me a kind reference to myself from a telegram of yours, when he proposed to me the other day to go to South Africa to assist in the deliberations of a new Commission.[1] . . . But with the fissure in my party here, and the General Election looming in front, I felt bound to stay at my post in these days when Liberalism is in very stormy seas. I could not leave Asquith and Grey at this very critical moment, at least I felt I ought not to, and just when we are getting a majority of our people to begin to profess sane views about South African matters, seemed to me just the moment when, from a public point of view, no Liberal holding these views could afford to be away. All the same I wish I had been coming out to you to help, even ever so little. You have had as hard a time as any man could have, anxiety to bear and misunderstanding to cope with. But it is coming out right, and if it leaves you the older, it leaves you also the greater. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Haldane.

5/9/00. . . . I was very grateful for your kind remarks about myself, not from any egotistical feeling, but because they show that

[1] The Concessions Commission to inquire into the Monopolies and Concessions of the Kruger regime in the Transvaal, over which the Hon. Alfred Lyttelton presided.

for you at any rate the cloud of misunderstanding, which has quite hidden me, my views, feelings, actions and character, from many of my old friends, does not exist. . . . I feel absolutely confident in the verdict of time, when the true facts have all come to light—they are coming quickly now thanks to the correspondence daily being picked up. But I only want to thank you for having been among those who preserved their calmness of judgment, even perhaps a little bias in favour of an old friend, when the tide of misrepresentation was running hard against me, and who did not believe that my personality, such as they had known it for years, had suddenly undergone a complete and sinister transformation, and that I had become, by a change of hemisphere, a tactless, intemperate, hasty, arrogant, and tyrannical bashaw. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Rendel.

20/8/00. . . . I have no time to say anything to-day, but I like to poke you in the ribs once and again just to prevent any serious interruption on your part of that series of letters from you which are so welcome and so interesting. I have hardly ever time to read the English papers in these days. Praise no longer affects me and blame is water on a duck's back, but it is important to know, for business purposes, how the currents of feeling are going, and, but for you and Gell, most faithful of friends and correspondents, I should often be rather in the dark about these. . . . Our friends the enemy are very fierce and very truculent. Nevertheless, it is all coming right, if you will only stick to it in England. After all it is worth several years' trouble to get a great country like this on to the right lines once for all. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Rendel to Sir A. Milner.

14/9/00. . . . You say " it is all coming right, if you will only stick to it in England." That is the best of good news. You need not be afraid. We are not going to fail you. I think that the anti-war party in England do not understand the feeling of average Englishmen about the war. There is not, and there never has been, in my judgment, anything that can be justly called a war-fever. But there are thousands and thousands of men, who were young in 1881 and 1884, and thereabouts, and are not very old now, who will never, so long as they live, forgive the Liberal party of those days for the shame and humiliation of its abject surrender, and will pardon anything to a Government that has shown, at length, that England will stand by her own people, and maintain her honour, be the cost what it may. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Rendel to Sir A. Milner.

6/10/00. . . . By the time this letter reaches you the elections will be almost ancient history. They have already gone so far as to enable one to say that the verdict will be conclusive and overwhelming. I congratulate you with all my heart, and over and over again. It is not a snatch victory, not a " khaki-wave." No ! I believe the simple fact of the matter is that the working classes of this country have more common sense than their own professed champions give them credit for, and that they know that the Government have had the courage to do the right thing, though perhaps they have not done it very well, and that neither courage nor purpose is to be found on the other side. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Goschen to Sir A. Milner.

26/10/00. . . . You will probably have heard that I have retired from the House of Commons and from the Admiralty. . . . I felt that though I have borne the strain of the last years fairly well up to now (and the family declare that I am still fresh and young), I could not go on much longer, and that it was better for me, and better for the public service that I should go before any diminution of efficiency set in. . . . There is one advantage to the public to which I attribute great importance : viz. that the Government must be more or less reconstructed and that an example has been set, which it may be difficult for others, on occasions, to avoid following, of Ministers retiring spontaneously when they approach or pass 70 and when younger men ought to come on. Again a change ought to take place in *comparatively* peaceful times, if it is probable that the older men would break down under the pressure of a war, so that new men may know the ropes, and have gained some experience. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lord Goschen.

19/10/00. . . . Of course I can never feel towards any statesman of note who has played or may be playing a rôle in my lifetime, what I feel towards you. Politically, I owe everything to you. You not only opened the door for me into the public service, but have been my master in the difficult art of statecraft, if indeed I may claim to have attained even a journeyman's rank in it. I am very proud of that fact. If you now intend to retire from active public life, I believe you are yourself the only person who will not deeply regret such retirement. . . . Nobody can say that you have not a right, and more than a right, to a life of honoured leisure, after your manifold and splendid services to the State. It is a long tale indeed to go over all the big things you have done,

or taken a leading part in. And perhaps you have never—except in the great crisis of 1886—done more important, though you may have done more conspicuous work, than in the last few years. The end is fine, if this is the end, and worthy of the whole story. But it is not the work done, big as it is, which those who, like myself, will ever be proud to have belonged to you, will look back upon with the greatest gratitude. It is the grand standard of public conduct which you have set before others, by invariably following it yourself. It may be presumptuous of me to say these things, but I have always felt that some day I did want to thank you *outspokenly* for all you have done for me and many others, as individuals engaged in the service of the State, by that great example. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

13/11/00. . . . I have never said a word about the Ministry. Well, you can imagine I was pleased to see my two first favourites both in the Cabinet. . . . I am *more than delighted* that Brodrick has got the War Office, though it is a job which might make any man tremble. God only knows, whether it is in the power of man to make any real improvement, until we have had a much worse thrashing than any we have known yet. These " ovations " to Generals who have been failures, or next door to failures, the frantic enthusiasm over people who have just done their duty, cause me misgivings. The nation is somehow not sound in its judgment, though the heart is right. But any way Brodrick will himself be *serious* and strenuous. I am sure he will not try to palm off any sham upon us. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mrs. Gaskell.

15/8/00. . . . I have been so cut off from friends this last year amid labours and anxieties which I hardly like to speak of for fear of seeming to exaggerate or to " grouse." I don't want to do either, and always feel, even when things are at their worst and the weakness of the flesh tempts one to cry out a little, that after all one ought rather to be proud and grateful for being pitched upon by Fate to bear a great load of public care, and that it is cowardly and currish to complain of it. The confidence of the people one has fought for, and the way in which everybody comes to one for everything (forgive the egotism) are a great support in a way. But for all that, I shall be happy when the hour arrives to put the burden down and retire to the contemplative obscurity which suits me best, and can see my friends again, which is what I love most. And thank you, by the same token, for letting me have a glimpse of a few of them. I want you to thank Mrs. Horner for her kind

message—that little corner of your letter, which she filled up with words of affectionate remembrance. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

October. . . . I see before me, in a clear light a most appalling jungle. But I have seen such before and I know how, approaching in a certain way, I have yet found a path through. Here I have not found the path yet, but I know that *I am going to find it.* . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mrs. Montefiore.

22/8/00. . . . I do so agree with you about Lewis McIver, and hope he will stick to politics and on no account give it up, both for his own sake and that of the country. It is the presence of a lot of men like him in the House, independent, *with no axes to grind*, but with social position, knowledge of the world and a disinterested concern for the public good—which alone saves British politics. We are the *only decent democracy*—by virtue of having so many men of that class willing to give time to public business without office. . . . People like myself *could not carry on* the country's work abroad without a sprinkling of men like McIver in Parliament at home. The mere party politician could never understand their difficulties and would never properly support them. . . .

CHAPTER IV

The Military Administration of the New Colonies—Army Reform and the Guerilla War

The Orange River Colony.

BY a Proclamation dated May 24, the Queen's birthday, Lord Roberts annexed the Free State under the name of the Orange River Colony. This was done in pursuance of a Commission appointing him Administrator, conveyed to him by the High Commissioner.[1] Immediately after his occupation of Bloemfontein in March he had appointed Major-General Sir George Pretyman Military Governor of the occupied territory. Mr. John Emrys-Evans, late British Vice-Consul at Johannesburg, was appointed Financial Adviser, whilst many of the State departments continued to be administered by former Free State officials. By June, General Pretyman had organized the civil administration under Army officers acting as District Commissioners, presiding over Dutch and English magistrates in twelve districts, and administering Martial Law. The High Commissioner had feared a heavy deficit, but within a short time the Colony was paying its way. The schools were re-established.[2]

Though the north-east remained hostile under the influence of De Wet's activities, order had been restored in the rest of the country, where the Boers, pleased with British administration of justice, were anxious to settle down. Garrisons were stationed in the principal towns, and a force of 300 Provisional Mounted Police was being recruited to maintain order and enforce the authority of the magistrates. They proved invaluable, but the active military operations elsewhere rendered it impossible to fill the ranks.

Unfortunately there were no British regulations defining the

[1] Cd. 261, pp. 136–8, 144, 153 ; Buckle, G. E., " Letters of Queen Victoria," 3rd Ser., III, p. 553.

[2] Cd. 261, pp. 63–9.

powers and duties of a Military Governor. General Pretyman found himself in an uncharted sea, whilst few of his soldier subordinates had any experience of civil administration under South African conditions. The High Commissioner disapproved of many things that were done, but could only offer his advice. This he did successfully when Mr. Fraser protested against the indiscriminate removal of burghers as both unjust and impolitic (June).[1] General Pretyman, in his difficult position, consulted Sir Alfred upon innumerable points of policy and administration, some of which are indicated in the following reply, which shows that his mind was already busy with the great problems of education and land settlement in the new Colonies :

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to General Pretyman.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, CAPE TOWN. 20/6/00. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . I have a large number of questions of yours to answer, and several things to tell you, which have been gradually accumulating here. I owe you 1,000 apologies for not writing before, but my time has been even more than usually occupied. I *never* work less than 10 hours a day and generally much more (that is Sundays included). And all my staff are more or less knocked out. . . .

Complaints as to seizure of stock. I enclose copies of two petitions which have been addressed to me by prisoners from the O.R.C., now at Green Point. I have told them both that inquiry will be made. . . . I am anxious about cases of this character, as I feel it is important, both for our good reputation and for the future popularity of British rule, that people should understand that we are scrupulous in the protection of property and that nothing will be taken from people except (1) as a legitimate punishment for misconduct—such as taking up arms after submission, etc., or (2) for military requirements, in which case, payment ought always to be made. . . . This brings me to a very big question, viz. payment for stock taken by the Military and paid for by " chits." It has been very strongly represented to me that they ought to redeem these chits as soon as possible. Otherwise people will lose faith in us, and the Jew or Gombeen man will buy up the chit at a ruinous loss to the holder, and later on get the whole of the value, and, perhaps, by a little cheating and tampering with documents, more than the whole of it, out of Government. . . . *Education.* I feel the importance and the urgency of this, but till we have got a Superintendent, I fear we shall make little progress. I am looking out for a man. He is not easy to find. Meanwhile I

[1] " Episodes in My Life," Sir John G. Fraser, p. 280.

should be glad to know more . . . especially with regard to the support of schools out of public funds, and the *medium of instruction.* My view is that any school relying upon aid from the State should not only teach English, but make English the medium of instruction in all but the elementary classes. . . . I don't think there is any class of man so likely to influence the future generation for good or evil, loyalty or the reverse, as the teachers. And there is another thing of the greatest importance. Do they teach history in the schools? And, if so, what history? I believe really good historical teaching, which should include South African history from an honest and impartial point of view, and something of British history and the growth of the Empire, would be of immense use. We want a good text-book of this sort.[1] At present I shrewdly suspect the "studious youth" are brought up almost exclusively on Majuba, with a little Jameson Raid thrown in as a seasoning. . . .

Land Settlement. I consider this the greatest of all our problems, one in which success would be most important, but which is most difficult to approach. There is, I understand, a certain amount of valuable Government land in the O.R.C., but not nearly enough. My idea is the formation of a Land Settlement Board appointed by Government to take over Government lands, and to acquire any fresh farms that may come into the market, if deemed suitable. . . . For this purpose the Board would require some capital to start with, not necessarily a large amount, as it will be able gradually to turn it over—and this capital I should hope to get out of the loan which will, in any case, be raised on the revenues of the Colony as a consequence of the war. It should be the duty of the Land Settlement Board to select settlers from *those who have served in the war*, and they should acquire the land on easy terms as to purchase by instalments (personally I should like to make volunteering, and a few days annual drill and rifle practice, one of the conditions of tenure, and reduce the purchase money somewhat on account of such service). I do not think we ought, except under special circumstances, to advance money for stocking the farms, or otherwise to advance capital. I am open to argument on this point, but, on the whole, I think there is danger that, if we make the start too easy, and *without any stake on the part of the settler himself*, we may get a lot of undesirable people who will take up the thing without sufficient reflection, or as a mere speculation. I am thinking of making a proposal on these lines to the Home Government. . . .

The High Commissioner was presently able to state (30/7/00)

[1] A book on these lines, entitled "The Story of the World," was presently written by Miss M. B. Synge, at Lord Milner's suggestion and with his help.

PROCLAMATION OF ANNEXATION OF TRANSVAAL, AT PRETORIA, OCTOBER 25, 1900.

that the Government had decided to appoint a Commission to consider the settlement upon the land of British immigrants, primarily those who had served in the war. In order to avoid loss of time, Sir Alfred immediately instituted a small office at Cape Town to collect information on the subject, to which General Pretyman contributed. But the Commission, he intended, should sit in the serener atmosphere of Bloemfontein and Pretoria, where the Imperial authority was unquestioned, and where it would be untroubled by the Parliamentary politics of the Cape Colony (Milner Papers, XIX, i and ii).

After July, however, the situation changed. The need of troops for major operations elsewhere led to the reduction of the garrisons in the Orange River Colony. Roving commandos then began to appear, and increasing in strength, re-occupied unprotected towns and districts, and were joined by many of the burghers who had previously surrendered. By the autumn, the civil administration of the Province under the military regime was paralysed.

The Transvaal.

Lord Roberts's Commission to annex the South African Republic and make provision for its temporary government was dated July 4 (Cd. 420, pp. 9, 88). The annexation was proclaimed on September 1, the new territory being named *The Transvaal*. Chamberlain had toyed with the idea of calling it Queen's Colony.[1]

Telegram. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir A. Milner.

8/6/00. In view of possible early annexation of S.A.R. what are your suggestions as to the name? Are there strong reasons for reverting to the old name Transvaal? I should like if possible to associate future name with Her Majesty. What do you think of "Queen's Colony"?

Telegram. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

11/6/00. . . . I am strongly in favour of retaining the old name, viz. Transvaal, thus reverting to the nomenclature existing when the country was ours before. It is familiar, convenient, and as far as it has a political significance at all, it is British as contrasted with the term S.A.R., which Kruger has tried so hard to substitute

[1] Another idea was "Nord Veldt," with the O.R.C. as "Middle Veldt." Other names suggested for the O.R.C. were "Brandesia" (after President Brand), or "Robertsia," or again (by Sir Harry Wilson) V.R.I. Staat (leaving out the "j" from Vrijstaat).

for it, though he only succeeded in so doing officially, and which was a symbol of Afrikander independence. At the same time it is not offensive to the Dutch, as any brand-new name would be. . . .

Whilst still on the march from Bloemfontein, Roberts had consulted the High Commissioner as to the administration of Johannesburg when captured. He proposed (4/5/00) to divide it into five departments, municipal, police, mining, native affairs, and trade and food supply, each under a military officer with a civilian as adviser. He made some suggestions as to the personnel, and asked for the High Commissioner's advice on these and other points (Milner Papers, XLV, i, 18).

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lord Roberts.

10/5/00. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . The moment you reach the Rand, there will be an immense pressure put upon us to get back. This will have to be resisted, as for some time the single line will have its work cut out for it in supplying the army and the people already there. And this will give us an opportunity of letting in the right people first—a matter of great importance—and keeping the undesirables back to the last. . . . The policing of Johannesburg will be a very peculiar business, quite distinct from that of the rest of the country, which should be entrusted to mounted marksmen of the Cape Mounted Rifles or Cape Mounted Police type. Indeed I should like to see *one* body of Police of this kind (at least 2,000 strong) take over the whole of the country work in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. But apart from these, and totally different in character, as their work will be totally different, we must have a *Rand Police*, to look after not only Johannesburg but the whole mining district of which it is the centre. This Police, including both a detective department and an ordinary Constabulary, will ultimately, no doubt, be under the future municipality. But *we* shall have to create it, and I have no doubt we shall be able to create, and in time to hand over to the future municipality, a much better Police than they could, at starting, frame for themselves. My idea as to its composition (except the detective Branch which must be separately recruited) would be as follows : As soon as we get hold of the Rand to *disband entirely all* existing forces (consisting largely of the greatest scoundrels unhung, and altogether of our enemies) and to entrust the policing of the town to the irregular Corps recruited mainly from the Rand. . . . Their local knowledge would be valuable, and under a strong Commander, like [*Sir Aubrey*] Woolls Sampson, I believe they would keep perfect order. Of course this would only be a temporary

arrangement. . . . A certain number will probably remain and supply a nucleus (especially of officers) for the new force, which could then be filled up by enlistment throughout South Africa. By that time the war would be over, and many Reservists, Yeomen, etc., with previous police experience, would be available. I think we ought thus to get one of the best police forces in the world—as certainly it will have one of the toughest jobs in dealing with the international scoundrelism which is at present establishing itself on the Rand. I should be glad, at your leisure (if you ever have any; perhaps you may pass a day or two at Kroonstad) to know your views about this. Meanwhile our C.I.D. will be coming from England. . . .

Roberts agreed with these suggestions, and proposed that a scheme for the Rand Police should be drawn up at once (16/5/00. Milner Papers, XLV, i). He had taken with him several leading members of the Uitlander community, including Messrs. W. J. Wybergh, Hoyle, Douglas Forster, Samuel Evans, and others, who were placed in charge of various public departments.

With the occupation of Pretoria and the flight of the Government of the South African Republic, the future administration of the Transvaal had also to be considered. In reply to a telegram in which Roberts whilst on the march had made suggestions and asked for his advice, the High Commissioner, with brilliant promptitude, put his ideas upon paper.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lord Roberts.

25/5/00. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . I found your telegram on returning from the parade at 12 and I mean this answer to go to-night. There is not much time for writing a finished despatch, but, as I have been thinking over this matter for months, I am not taken wholly unawares. . . . Although the military government of the Transvaal, as of Orange River, is intended to be provisional, it is very important that we should make the right start. The first direction given to the new administration, in its embryonic state, may be very difficult to alter hereafter. Therefore, before taking any step at all, we should be quite clear in our minds where we mean ultimately to go to. Our provisional arrangements should be made with an eye to, and should be so conceived as to pave the way to, the most stable form which will succeed. What is that form to be? I look forward to several years, and possibly more, of what is known as "Crown Government." Of course, a self-governing Colony is the ultimate aim, or absorption in a self-

governing South Africa. But it would be madness to attempt self-government for some time. . . .

Till then we must depend on an autocratic civil government, and, because it may have to last some time, and requires to be *extraordinarily good*—for its difficulties will be extraordinary—we must be very careful in the construction of it. A good deal depends on the system—the number of officers, the nature of their duties, and their relations to one another. But even more depends upon the selection of the men who are to fill them. The great advantage of conquest is that it gives us a clean slate. The great advantage of the period of military government—which is in its nature an *interregnum*—is that it gives us time to lay the foundations of that government, which is to succeed it, carefully. But everything we do under military government, everything *administrative*, I mean (for I am not thinking of military arrangements pure and simple, which are beyond my province), should be so done, that it can go on when the military Governor disappears, and the civil Governor of the future takes his place. I do not mean that the whole fabric of civil government need be complete by that time. Not at all. But what there is of it should be such, that it need not be altered, or very little altered.

I dread the idea of things being done in a hurry because they are regarded as only provisional. Certain arrangements and offices, of course, there will be, which really are provisional —I mean that they will only be necessary while the country is actually under military rule. But there are others, and they are the most important of all, which though started under military rule, are in their nature permanent. The danger is, that we may make these arrangements too hastily, thinking that everything is provisional, may appoint men, who are *good enough provisionally*, but who will be difficult to get rid of, and who may give things a twist in the wrong direction. . . . Is there any need to have a Military Governor of the whole Transvaal? While you are in the country, and indeed as long as you are in South Africa at all, you ought in my opinion to be the only military administrator *of the whole country under military rule*. That position it seems to me very important to maintain. It greatly facilitates the transfer from military to civilian administration. My private hope and wish is, that you may stay long enough (I hope for your own sake this does not mean so very long) that any other Military Administrator will not be necessary, but that the reins of government will pass straight from your hands to that of the permanent Civil Governor. Of course that Governor *may* be chosen from the ranks of soldiers. When I speak of military and civil in this letter I am speaking of functions, not of persons. I do not in the least wish to exclude soldiers

from this or any permanent civil office. Almost every man would be better for having been a soldier. I often wish that, at some time or other, I had been one myself. But, while I quite contemplate, and hope, that the great military wave, when it recedes, will leave a *stratum* of soldiers in civil offices, I deprecate any step, which would in any way tie the hands of the Home Government in a matter in which they ought to be so absolutely free, as that most important matter, the choice of a *permanent Civil Governor* of the Transvaal. And it seems to me that any Military Governor of the whole country, other than yourself, would occupy a position that might constitute a claim embarrassing to H.M. Government, when they came to choose a permanent Civil Governor. . . . My own decided opinion is that all Military Governors in the Transvaal should only be *your* deputies. . . . My suggestion is to keep the Governorship of the whole country (as I believe to be the intention of the Home Government) in your own hands, and to appoint deputies for the several districts, as they fall gradually under your control. The number and the boundaries of these districts must be left to circumstances to determine. I should be glad if it were not necessary to have too many of them. . . .

The branches of civil government which we have *certainly* to provide for are Finance, Law, Police, Natives, Mining, Public Works (principally Railways), Education, Agriculture and Land Settlement (very important). . . . The only matters absolutely urgent are Finance, Law, and Police. No doubt we shall *soon* want a Mining Commissioner and a Commissioner of Natives. But these are very important and difficult posts to fill, and at the outset I do not think they are very urgent. For weeks after Johannesburg is occupied you will have to be very resolute in keeping people out, only allowing such a number of managers and workmen for each mine as are absolutely necessary for preparatory work. Actual mining cannot commence for some time, for the railways will be unable to feed a large population besides the Army. The other big administrative functions—except Railways—must wait, not only till we have occupied the Rand, but till we have occupied most of the country. And Railways are already in good hands—those of Girouard.[1] We shall not need better as long as we have him. Police, Finance, Law—perhaps we should add—for Johannesburg—Town Management (the work which under a regular system will pass entirely to a Municipal Council)—these are the matters of absolute urgency. . . . I should be *very slow to determine the exact limits, duties, and personnel* of a Native Department. It bristles with difficulties.

Taking these departments severally, there is, if I understand

[1] Colonel Sir E. P. Girouard, K.C.M.G., etc., Director of Railways.

you, a difference of view between us as to their composition. According to your telegram, it would appear that you contemplate in each department a military head with a civilian adviser. But why the military head? Of course, they will all be, for the time being, under the supreme military control. There is firstly the Military Governor of Johannesburg, and next yourself, the Military Governor of the whole country. What is the object of a military head (I don't mean a military man, for, of course, a soldier may be the best man to put into any particular civil office) in a purely administrative department? That would seem to me to multiply offices and might lead to many future difficulties. . . . (*Sir Alfred then outlined his suggestions for the organization and personnel of these Departments—the Rand Police, Municipal management of Johannesburg, etc.*)

And now I come to my last point to-day, the last, but in my judgment perhaps the most important. Besides the men in the special departments . . . we seem to me to require a man to advise about the organization of the service generally, to work out, in fact, carefully and in detail, the general scheme of administration, which I am now dealing with hurriedly and only in the roughest outline. You will need, I fancy, an all-round civilian adviser, who knows the country and who can be consulted about the organization and the *personnel* of *any* civil department. I have no doubt in my own mind, who is the man, of all others, who could be of most use in that capacity just now. It is my principal helper here, Mr. Fiddes, the so-called "Imperial Secretary." What the High Commissioner's office will do without him, I don't quite know. But the beginnings of civil administration in the Transvaal, under military control, are of such vast importance, such much greater importance at this moment, to Imperial interests than anything else in South Africa, that I must let you have the best man I know of, if you want him. His qualifications are (i) his intimate knowledge of all Transvaal affairs, which he dealt with for many years at the Colonial Office, and has dealt with all day and every day here for 3 years; (ii) his intimate acquaintance with the best traditions of English Civil Government; (iii) his possessing the confidence of the Colonial Office as well as mine, and knowing very nearly all that I could suggest. If his going up now in a merely advisory capacity, were to result in his growing into the Colonial Secretary of the permanent civil government of the Transvaal, I should be glad of the result.[1] . . .

Roberts expressed his gratitude for these suggestions, and acted upon them (2/6/00. Milner Papers, XLV, i, 19).

[1] [Sir] George Fiddes was presently appointed to this post (1900–02).

Whilst Lieut.-Colonel Colin Mackenzie was appointed Military Governor of Johannesburg and the adjoining districts, and Lieut.-Colonel F. J. Davies Military Commissioner of Police, Major-General Sir John Maxwell was made Military Governor of Pretoria and the rest of the Transvaal. Lord Roberts retained general administrative control, with Fiddes as his Political Adviser, Mr. J. W. Wessels as his Legal Adviser, and Mr. Emrys-Evans as Financial Adviser. Leading Uitlanders were invited to act as a Committee for administering municipal affairs. Mr. Wybergh was entrusted with the charge of the mines.

Writing from Vredefort Road Station to the High Commissioner on May 24, Roberts referred to the Mining Question :

" Some of the mines, chiefly those belonging to English Companies I believe, were closed at the beginning of the war ; even pumping was not allowed, and in consequence there must have been great destruction of property. A few mines belonging to neutrals were allowed to continue pumping, while a certain number were taken over by Government to draw gold from. All these have now been closed by my orders except as regards pumping."

The Boer Government had intended to destroy the mines the day before the surrender of Johannesburg. Destruction of the mines, and indeed of the British inhabitants of Johannesburg, was advocated in the Dutch Press, both before and after the outbreak of war. The mines were only saved by the courageous intervention of the Acting Commandant, Dr. Krause, who arrested the leader of a party which had been sent to wreck them by the State Attorney, Mr. (General) Smuts.[1]

Plans for the Future Administration of the New Colonies.

Sir Alfred was already devoting every moment he could spare to the consideration of plans for the administration and development of the annexed Colonies. In addition, two Commissions had been sent out from home, one under Mr. H. O. Arnold Forster to investigate the opportunities of land settlement in the new Colonies ; the other, under the Hon. Alfred Lyttelton, to examine the concessions and monopolies which had been one of the worst scandals of the Kruger regime. Their conclusions were published in the Blue Books, Cd. 624 and 626, 627. In December, Sir David

[1] C. 9521 ; Despatches, Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain, April 18, May 1 and 9, 1900 ; Cd. 261, pp. 85, 86, 132–3, 140–4 ; Feb. 6, 1901 ; Cd. 547, p. 56 ; Dr. Farrelly, " The Settlement after the War," p. 218.

Barbour was deputed to report upon the finances of the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal (Cd. 628). Sir Alfred was exceedingly anxious that the period of military government should be as brief as possible ; and that the civil government, which must succeed it, should not be prejudiced by the appointment of personnel under the temporary military regime, or by the handling of " big permanent questions " by men who had no experience of civil administration in general, or of South African problems in particular. He was equally anxious, from the first, that the autocratic civil administration which must first ensue, should not be prejudiced in its task of settlement by any definite promise of self-government at a specified date.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

9/5/00. . . . I see a most appalling idea beginning to gain ground in England that we are to have in the conquered territories a short period of military government followed immediately by full self-government. I cannot imagine a more perfect recipe to ensure a Total Failure. That military Government should be short, is no doubt desirable. I should like to see a civil administration in the Free State within a few weeks of annexation. But it absolutely must give way to an autocratic civil Government, till the chaos is somewhat cleared up. I am as much for self-government as anybody, but it surely is the clearest of clear things that to hurry self-government would be to prevent its ever having a fair chance (for you cannot settle fundamental and intensely complicated questions, like those which will confront us at Johannesburg, by the methods of party politics *in their crudest form*). There must be a process of vigorous political sanitation before responsible government can grow in that soil, *and there must be time for the British population to come back and qualify as voters*, and in larger numbers, before we stake everything on a ballot-box.

No doubt from the first there will be a great deal of real self-government. I mean any wise administrator will, from the outset, rely upon the advice and co-operation of the best Uitlanders (who, in spite of all the lies about them, are the ablest and honestest men in South Africa, and quite of the same type as leading men of business in our home centres of industry). He will not try to govern by hard and fast ideas, but have regard to the local knowledge of the men, who, when self-government can be safely introduced, ought to run it. But that kind of administration can only be carried on by civilians and very able civilians. You don't need very many from outside, but you do need a few.

They must not be hurried, and they must not be under the military. . . . The truth is that in the upper ranks of the army there is nothing like sufficient ability to manage their own business properly, much less to do other people's. Lord Roberts, who is head and shoulders above all the others, in his tact in dealing with non-soldiers as well as in his professional ability, has not got the men under him, or, owing to the rotten system of selection or no selection which has so long prevailed, would not be able to find the men, to administer properly. With few exceptions, wherever soldiers are now doing civilian work, things are going badly. The muddling of the various military commandants under Martial Law in the Colony causes endless and needless trouble. In the Free State the military administration is already rendering itself unpopular, and the prejudice against the military among loyal South Africans is becoming very strong. It is not against the soldiers themselves (they have behaved on the whole admirably), it is against the military, hard-and-fast, follow-your-instructions and never-take-local-advice, spirit in the management of civil affairs. No doubt many soldiers are available, and very useful for civil work. But they must be soldiers chosen for the possession of certain gifts, not chosen because they are looking out for billets and other people want to get them out of the way.

We must take time over settling the Republics, and that means civil government before the responsible government stage. It ought to be started soon. In the Free State it is a comparatively simple matter. The Government machinery is not and need not be complicated. A good civil head with three, or four British subordinates, a mounted Police of Colonists and Reservists volunteering out of the Army, is all that is essential. A nominee Council of local men, loyal to the new order, like [Sir J. G.] Fraser, will keep him straight as far as the feeling of the people is concerned, and in 6 months' time we shall know what organic changes are necessary to pave the way to self-government. In the Transvaal things will be immensely more complicated, but there is all the more reason to instal soon some form of civilian administration. The choice of the head is of immense importance and the question of his relations to the High Commissioner of great difficulty. I do not like to abandon that unity of direction, which is so important to British policy in South Africa, but I foresee that it will be impossible to clear the Augean stable of the Transvaal from Cape Town. . . . There is one man whom I am most anxious to transfer there at the earliest possible moment, and who is to my mind the necessary Government Secretary or whatever may be the name of the post, to the head of the Transvaal administration, and that is Fiddes. . . . Of course he would need to be replaced here—and

replaced, if possible, by a man from home conversant with South African affairs, such as Perry.[1] Wilson, of course, would also do admirably, but I foresee the necessity of keeping Wilson for a long time on the work he is now doing, and meanwhile there are a number of other High Commissioner's questions (Rhodesia, Protectorate and Basutoland), which will come upon us with a rush, as soon as the back of it is broken.

The air is full of suggestions as to the introduction of British Colonists, and I quite agree with that policy. But one or two mistakes must be carefully guarded against. The first is to send here unskilled workmen labourers or mere clerks. The unskilled labour of this country must be black, and the market for the poorest kind of clerical labour is here, as everywhere, overstocked. Skilled labourers will find their own way out, and the country can absorb great numbers. But the Mines and the Capitalists will take care of that. What does need careful encouragement, and possibly Government aid, is the introduction of men of British blood into the rural districts.

The South African problem will not be solved, until a larger proportion—I do not say the bulk—of the farmers are British. They need not necessarily be from the old country, indeed I think in many ways Australians and Canadians are better suited, but we do want to strengthen the British element on the land. But discrimination is necessary. An isolated British farmer here and there amidst a Dutch community is no use—he ends by becoming an ultra-Afrikander. Neither will you get one of the English race to take to the solitary life of the vast sheep farms of the Karoo. . . . But there are parts of the Transvaal, of the Orange Free State, and particularly there are districts in the East of the Colony, where British farmers already flourish, and could flourish in much larger numbers. In the Transvaal, Land Companies own large tracts. In the Eastern Free State (so called and "conquered territory," once Basutoland), and the Eastern portion of the Cape Colony land will be coming into the market in consequence of the war. It is here that men accustomed to cattle and horse breeding, and also to cereal cultivation on good-sized farms, make an excellent living. There is already a certain nucleus of British farmers, doing well, who would welcome the new-comers, and would find a support in them. We ought to make a belt of country, stretching right away from Queenstown along the Basutoland border, a country largely of British farmers. But to do so we ought to be in the market soon. . . .

[1] Mr. J. F. Perry was sent out from the Colonial Office as Acting Imperial Secretary at the Cape.

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir A. Milner.

31/5/00. *Reply to preceding.* . . . I think you are mistaken in supposing that there was ever any idea here that military government would be followed immediately by self-government. On the contrary, an indefinite period, which some hope will be two or three years, and others think will be longer, is expected to be filled up by Crown Colony Government until we are sufficiently assured of the goodwill of the Boers to grant full Colonial rights. I agree entirely with your views as to settlers. . . . I hope that civil administration in some shape or another will be immediately set up. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

23/5/00. . . . I am sending you to-day a confidential despatch about certain points in connection with the future administration of the two Republics. . . . We are working away steadily, in whatever time is left to us from the urgent preoccupations of every day, " getting up " the several questions which will confront us on the threshold, as soon as the Boer power is absolutely broken. Thanks largely to Van Hulsteyn,[1] a very able refugee (pure Hollander by-the-bye), who has placed his service voluntarily at my disposal, and helps Fiddes, we have already got a most valuable analysis of the financial resources of the Transvaal, and the position of the Netherlands Railway.[2] Other urgent matters—the dynamite concession, the Pass Law, as bearing on the supply of Native Labour, etc., are being gone into thoroughly, so we shall not be so helpless, if suddenly called upon, as I at one time feared. . . .

Sir Alfred now wished to know definitely whether the plan held good for his going to the Transvaal as first Governor, whilst retaining the High Commissionership (*v.* Ch. I). For it was from the Transvaal, he now saw more clearly than ever, that he must direct the great task of reconstruction.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

Government House, Cape Town. 30/5/00. [confidential] I have written two long despatches about the future government of the T.V., and yet only dealt with a small part of the subject. The truth is to a great extent the problems cannot be solved beforehand, but must be dealt with as they arise. . . . I have left out of my despatch any reference to the *person* of the future Governor,

[1] Sir Willem Van Hulsteyn.

[2] The Netherlands S.A. railway was subsequently appropriated, the shareholders receiving generous compensation.

as, the matter affecting myself, I think it better to say what I have to say in a private letter. Not only should I prefer to go to the T.V., taking my H.C.ship with me, and not only do I think it the right plan from the public point of view, but I should not care to stay in S. Africa on any other condition. . . . I am, as I think you know, not desirous of remaining very long in the Public Service, and am not a candidate for any other post. But I am, of course, deeply interested in the work of starting the new—and at last, if we are not hopeless bunglers, really British—S. Africa on the right lines. And that can only be done from the centre. I am not—you know I have never been—very hopeful about the Colony. But if we make the T.V. what it ought to be, the Colony will matter less, and in the long run, with the heart sound, the whole body will be saved, especially as Orange River is, I believe, easily saveable. It is a very big job, but I should approach it hopefully. . . . I should like my appointment to the T.V. not to be for any definite period . . . but for as long, and no longer, than my services were thought necessary to give the new administration a thoroughly good start. I think you know me well enough to know that I would put all my heart into it, and make it a point of honour to stick to it as long as I retained the confidence of the Government, and felt that the machine was not yet fairly at work. But I should like to feel free to go, as soon as I could do so with a good conscience, and not to have to stay out any particular term of years.

Besides the question of the period of his appointment, there was also the question of salary. From a pecuniary point of view the years which Sir A. Milner had spent as Governor of the Cape Colony had proved very costly. Necessary outlay of capital upon furniture, stables and sea passages had involved a loss of nearly £3,000. Chamberlain, always considerate in such matters, offered to propose a vote to compensate him. Sir Alfred, however, preferred to keep his personal affairs out of public discussion. But there was no reason why he should contemplate the continuance of such a financial drain upon his slender resources. There was also the larger consideration that a policy of running an Empire on the cheap, at the expense of Governors, tended to render high public office impossible for a poor man. Sir Alfred contended that it was obviously fair that a man should not be impoverished by working for the State. He suggested that, in addition to allowances for travelling and moving establishments, and the rent and furniture of Government House, the High Commissioner should continue to be paid £4,000 a year and the Governor of the Transvaal £7,000—

the same salary as Kruger had received. On public grounds he thought that the High Commissioner's salary ought to be paid wholly out of Imperial funds, instead of, as was then the case, £3,000 by the Cape, and £1,000 by the Treasury. The combined salary of £11,000 would, he thought, be sufficient to free him from anxiety and loss, without laying him open to the charge of wishing "to make money out of it" in the eyes of those unacquainted with the high cost of living in South Africa. These proposals met with Mr. Chamberlain's hearty agreement (Milner Papers, XXIII, iii, 129).

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir A. Milner.

18/6/00. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . I agree to your conditions and hope to make arrangements which will be satisfactory to you. Curiously enough I had a letter on the stocks on this subject, for, although you have never said a word to me in reference to it in any of your letters, I have had a suspicion that you might be making greater sacrifices than in my opinion would be justifiable. I do not think that anyone who serves his country with such ability and devotion as you have done ought to suffer in purse for his patriotism, and I was preparing to ask you whether the abnormal expenditure in the last few years has left you any margin, and if not to suggest that with your consent I should ask the House of Commons for a special vote. . . .

Speaking of Pretoria, I should like you at the same time to consider whether this would really be the best centre or capital in the future. I am told that it is a disagreeable place as to climate, and I do not see why, as we are making fresh arrangements, we should not select for our future seat of government some place where the surroundings would be as agreeable as is possible in South Africa. I can understand that there might be objections to Johannesburg, as being too much under British and mineowners' influence, but I do not think these objections are insuperable. It might, however, be possible to find a new Capital, such as Potchefstroom,[1] from which the new policy could be started. It is, however, a local question upon which your opinion would have the greatest weight, only I wish you to bear in mind that I think the comfort and health of those who are entrusted with such delicate work are almost the first consideration. As regards term of office, I am quite prepared to recommend the appointment without attempting at the present time to fix any period. I feel assured that if you can stand the strain you will wish to settle the business

[1] The original Boer Capital.

you undertake, and not to leave till you can safely entrust the result of your labours to others, and whether this will take one year or five years neither you nor I can at the present time decide; and I am quite ready in making the first appointment to leave you free to resign it whenever you thought that your work was done, and that you could safely take your rest. . . .

I incline to think that the time will very shortly come when it will be good policy to declare the annexation of the Transvaal. I do not think that we need wait for this, any more than in the case of the Orange River Colony, until every Boer has laid down his arms. It will be sufficient to have obtained general military control of the country. I had a long conversation with Fitzpatrick who is just returning to South Africa and found him very interesting. He is naturally anxious that we should not kill the goose that lays the eggs by imposing too heavy taxation on the Transvaal and the mining in the first instance. Without committing myself in any way I told him, first, that although we might be willing to rearrange taxation so as to make it more fair and above all to secure the highest contribution from the most profitable undertakings, yet I did not think it likely that there would be in the first instance any reduction whatever in the aggregate revenue to be derived from the Transvaal. We should have to provide for the army of occupation, and also for a substantial indemnity to cover the claims for compensation, and some kind of return towards the expenses of the war.[1] In regard to the latter point . . . I let him know that the smallest sum that would satisfy me would be £25,000,000 for the Transvaal, and five or ten millions—probably the former—for the Orange Free State. My feeling is that we ought to insist upon some such sum as a debt on the conquered territories. Whether they could afford to pay interest and sinking fund during the first years of the occupation may be a question, but ultimately, when the country is pacified and only a moderate force remains, I cannot doubt that there will be ample means to provide the interest upon the sums named, or even on a larger amount. I am sure that public opinion here will not be satisfied unless the mining interest pays considerably towards the cost of a war from which in the long run at any rate it will largely benefit. In fact they have nobody but themselves to thank if the sum is exorbitant, since some of the capitalists have been talking wildly at the meetings of shareholders about the savings which British occupation will secure to them. If they think that these savings, procured by the sacrifice of our lives and treasure, are to go into their pockets I think they will find themselves somewhat mistaken.

[1] See Ch. XII.

As to the seat of government and the site of Government House, Sir Alfred wished to keep an open mind for the present. A good deal of pressure was being applied from Johannesburg for making it the capital of the new Colony.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

27/6/00. The drive here at present is something awful. Indeed, if it were not for the splendid way in which people, on whom one has no claim whatever, help one, for nothing, we could not get on. I am sending to-day a very inadequate despatch (I am ashamed of my despatches nowadays) about the Police Force. The more I think of it, the more convinced I am that one large Military Police Force for all that part of South Africa under Imperial rule, is the right plan. It will virtually be a second army, and a better one, for South African purposes, than the regular garrison. The fact of its being larger at first than it will need to be in a very short time, is no drawback, but an advantage. It will help to keep settlers here till we have time to find land for them.

I am trying hard, among the innumerable claims upon my time, to start something in the direction of land settlement—to make a beginning. It is difficult, owing to the lack of men of capacity who can be turned on to it. But now that Fitzpatrick is back, I hope to get on more quickly. Things go very haltingly in the Orange River Colony, and have not begun well in Johannesburg. The prolongation of the war by De Wet's and Botha's guerilla tactics is even more mischievous from a civil than a military point of view. It prolongs the period of Military Government—a great drawback, as not only are the Military bad administrators, but the public are unreasonable in not making allowances for them. I shall heave a sigh of relief when I can get down to Bloemfontein to try to make things a bit ship-shape in the O.R.C. The thing I am most afraid of is that the political crisis in the Colony may keep me here, although I could do more good in the ex-Republics. In the meanwhile it is a relief to my mind to have Fiddes in the Transvaal. He will not be able to do much constructively. But he will be negatively useful in preventing blunders and jobs. It is the latter that I am, above all, in terror of.

When I say I am afraid of being detained here, I do not wish to suggest that I think my presence essential at the point we have reached. Whatever it was in my power to do to avoid a constitutional breakdown, has been done, and *may have* succeeded. H.M. Government cannot, in my judgment, afford to go any farther on the road of forbearance and conciliation. If, therefore, a majority should after all be found in the Lower House determined

to pursue an irreconcilable policy, the duty of the Governor will, as I regard the case, be a comparatively simple one. For a long time to come the Governor of the Cape will have a ticklish part to play. But I don't know that the immediate future will be the most trying, or that requiring most management, though superficially it might seem so. What strikes me about it is, that the positions are already clearly defined, and that on our side at any rate there is nothing much to be done, but to hold on, whether so doing involves a breach of the constitution or not, hoping, indeed, that it may not, but equally determined not to bow before a party owing its majority to the votes of rebels, even if it does. . . . There is a point . . . which I may just mention now, lest I seem to bring it up at a later time without having given proper notice. It is that I am pretty considerably "played out," and that though I can and will go on as long as the necessity is absolute, I certainly do contemplate making a break of some sort within the next twelve months, if I am going to stay in South Africa for some indefinite time longer. It cannot be made between now and the time of laying the foundations in the two ex-Republics. But that once done, and the principal people put into their places, I think it would be an absolute advantage to the State, as it would be something like a necessity for me personally, to come home for a short time before trying to grapple with the big problems of a permanent character, which the Government of the Transvaal involves. . . . I have had Goold Adams here for several days, and am increasingly struck by him. His part in the defence of Mafeking, though an inconspicuous, was by no means an inconsiderable one, and everybody I have seen is agreed about it. But apart from that, his excellent good sense, and tact, and knowledge of South African character (he has a real "knack" for dealing with Boers), make me more and more anxious to make more use of him than we should do in the Protectorate, which, with the Transvaal British, is a comparatively easy job. I hope he may be very seriously considered for the O.R.C. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Fiddes.

25/6/00. . . . I hope . . . that it will be dinned into everybody's ears . . . that the appointments are not only provisional, but *essentially temporary*. If there is one thing I care about more than another . . . it is to get men I myself believe in, as Magistrates of the Districts and Officers of Police. . . . There are three classes of persons to be carefully picked, if we are to run the machine properly. First, and foremost of all, of course, the chief officials of the Government, next the leading Uitlanders who are to co-

operate with us in running the industrial Districts ; third, and not to be forgotten, the Boers willing to throw in their lot with the new regime, who can help us in the country Districts. We want some men of the [*Sir J. G.*] Fraser type, if we can get them. . . . I hope we may get not only men who have always been on our side, but some of the better men amongst those who have been against us. There is something to be made, I am sure, of the pure Boer of the better type. It is the Hollander who is so hopeless. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir A. Milner.

23/7/00. . . . I am waiting anxiously for a notification from you that you are ready to take up work at Bloemfontein or Pretoria. I am sure that we shall not begin to move really until civil government has supplanted military administration. Of course all appointments stand over for this. . . . Speaking generally we entirely agree as to the general lines of future policy, and you need not fear to proceed with your plans on this account. At present we assume that you will be Governor of the Transvaal and High Commissioner, and Hely-Hutchinson Governor of the Cape. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Selborne to Sir A. Milner.

24/7/00. . . . Nothing could be more satisfactory than your complete understanding with our chief. You and he wish exactly the same ends and by the same means. This is equally true of Cape Colony rebels, Orange River and Transvaal Colonies policy, personnel and your own position. . . .

As it was then hoped that the military administration would soon be superseded by civil government, Chamberlain thought the time was ripe for outlining the system of government proposed for the two new Colonies. In a despatch to Sir Alfred, dated August 2, 1900, he premised that " it is the desire of H.M. Government that the inhabitants of these territories, assuming that they peaceably acquiesce in British rule and are ready to co-operate, irrespective of race, in maintaining the peace and furthering the prosperity of the country, should, as soon as circumstances permit, have all the advantages of self-government similar to that which is enjoyed by the inhabitants of the Cape Colony and Natal. There must, however, be a period between the annexation of the territories to Her Majesty's Dominions and the grant of self-government, during which the administration will be conducted by persons directly responsible to the Crown."

He thought that the two Colonies should have a Governor-

in-Chief, with his headquarters in the Transvaal, and a Lieutenant-Governor of the Orange River Colony under him. In both Colonies there were to be an Executive Council, consisting of the principal officials, and a Legislative Council, consisting of the Governor and Lieutenant-Governor, the members of the Executive Council, and, in the Orange River Colony at any rate, of unofficial members nominated by the Crown and representative of local feeling and interests. In the Transvaal, with its heritage of corrupt, incompetent and unrepresentative government, it was deemed advisable to entrust the power of legislation at first to the Executive Council only. But in both Colonies genuine municipalities were to be established at the earliest possible date, to whom the management of all strictly local affairs were to be entrusted. H.M. Government desired to make the change to British rule as easy as possible to the burgher population, and to see the old laws and customs and the old officials retained as far as was practicable. The machinery of government and its staff would obviously have to be reconstructed, but in the Orange River Colony it was hoped that few changes would be needed. Chamberlain explained his policy to the House of Commons on December 7. It was submitted for comment to the Governments of the Cape Colony and Natal early in the following year. The Cape Ministry (25/1/01) expressed general concurrence, whilst laying stress on the inadvisability of granting self-government prematurely. They urged a vigorous policy of immigration and land settlement as the necessary preliminary to the concession of representative constitutions. Confederation was the ultimate object to be kept in view. In this the Natal Ministers agreed (23/3/01), and insisted upon the importance of making English the official and predominant language. They also pressed Natal's claim to an enlargement of her territory.[1]

After considerable discussion with the Secretary of State, it was decided that, when the High Commissioner took up his new office as Governor-in-Chief of the new Colonies, he should be succeeded by Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson.[2] Sir Alfred, who cordially approved of this appointment, thought that the exceptional ability and charm of Sir Arthur Lawley marked him out as Sir Walter's successor in the Governorship of Natal. The Colonial Office,

[1] Cd. 547. Cf. Ch. I, p. 40.

[2] Chamberlain, desirous of securing some person of political eminence and experience, had offered the post to Sir Edward Grey and Lord Cranborne, among others.

however, feeling that it would not be fair to go outside the service, chose Sir Henry McCallum, who had proved his competence as Governor of Newfoundland. For Lieutenant-Governor of the Orange River Colony, many possibilities were considered, but the High Commissioner's strong recommendation of Major (Sir Hamilton) Goold-Adams was decisive. It proved a singularly happy choice (June, July, Milner Papers, XLVII, ii).

Both the Secretary of State and the High Commissioner had hoped that Sir Alfred would be able to go in June for a couple of months to Bloemfontein, and thereafter to Pretoria, to inaugurate civil government there. But the effects of the guerilla warfare led to continual disappointments. First a large part of the Orange River Colony, and then the whole of the south-western portion of the Transvaal, from the Rand right up to the borders of the Colony, slipped back into the enemy's hands. For months Sir Alfred was obliged to remain at Cape Town, where he felt his presence was less vital.

Meanwhile the results of the military administration were not proving altogether successful. Its shortcomings were inevitable in the circumstances, but this did not reconcile the future Governor to the "perfect carnival of organization and appointments" which he learned was in progress in the Transvaal, after Mr. Fiddes had gone home on leave. "We shall soon have officials enough to man the whole Empire," he exclaimed.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

7/7/00. . . . The Johannesburg Statute Book under Martial Law is really a sight for gods and men. Everybody up there is at loggerheads and everything at sixes and sevens. So I feel more than ever that, if I don't come to grief before leaving my old kingdom, I shall pretty surely find a grave in the new one. . . . I can't do anything just now, but must just wait—yet it is a sort of waiting which is not a recuperation, for, instead of gathering new force, one is squandering what is left after a big fight, in endless details. The Great Army is split up into a lot of small garrisons and flying columns, all over the shop, no big concentration, or effective stroke anywhere, yet it is engaged all the time. But, of course, at any moment, the trumpet may again sound to battle, or that gulf may open in the market-place and the Knight in full armour may have to take his last leap into it. I am tired, but my mind, which goes on curiously by itself, unaffected by the feelings of the moment, tells me steadily that this reaction was inevitable,

that I must not mind feeling tired, flat, woolly-headed, and that, if I am ever really wanted for any big job again, strength will be given to me as it has been given. . . .

At last, on October 7, foreseeing a few weeks of comparative quiet after the Cape Parliament had adjourned, Sir Alfred obtained Chamberlain's official permission to visit Bloemfontein and Pretoria. Since he would have no formal authority there until after Lord Roberts's departure, it was decided to render his position clear by the despatch (October 18) of Commissions (signed on October 6 and 8), appointing him High Commissioner and Administrator of the two new Colonies upon Roberts's approaching retirement.[1] For the moment he remained also Governor of the Cape Colony. But as the Secretary of State observed in his covering despatch :—

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir Alfred Milner.

18/10/00. . . . Such a combination of offices is naturally of a purely temporary character, and could not be filled by you for any length of time. H.M.'s Government are anxious to take advantage of your unique fitness for the great task of inaugurating the civil government of the two Colonies, and it is therefore proposed that as soon as the necessary legal provision can be made for establishing constitutions for the two new Colonies, Her Majesty's pleasure should be taken as to your appointment as their Governor, with a Lieutenant-Governor for the Orange River Colony, and that you should cease to be the Governor of the Cape Colony. This will involve the severance of the High Commissionership from the Governorship of the Cape of Good Hope, to which it has been attached for a long series of years. I am convinced that, looking to all the circumstances and to the general interests of South Africa, your Ministers will recognize that this arrangement is the right one, and, indeed, could hardly be avoided in consequence of the new order of affairs, and that, at any rate as long as your services in South Africa continue, the central position which attaches itself to the office of High Commissioner should be retained in your person. . . .

Chamberlain also drew attention to a significant clause in the new Commission, which authorized the High Commissioner to invite the Governments of the Colonies and Protectorates to send representatives to confer with him upon matters of common

[1] Cd. 547, pp. 3–7 ; Milner Papers, XLVII, ii, 50.

interest. This provision, he explained, was intended to enable him to "further the union and consolidation of South Africa."

Day after day the high pressure of work had continued. Day after day, save for an occasional hour's walk in the garden, the High Commissioner slaved literally from early to late at his desk, or in the Council room; writing despatches, receiving deputations, presiding over Committees, interviewing politicians, soldiers, and men of business, and at meals entertaining the many persons of note and importance, naval, military or social, who passed through Cape Town. Such entries in the *Diary* as the following indicate the perpetual strain to which he was subject:

Sept. 24. Worked all day and got through a lot . . . but by 5.30 I was fairly pumped. . . . Worked again till dinner-time. . . .

So the days went on almost invariably. But on October 1 there was a short break between his morning and evening labours. Sir Alfred, accompanied by the Hon. Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton and Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Forster, attended the Turf Club race-meeting, and went on to "the Athletic and Cycle meeting at Newlands, where I saw Col. Stowe, the American Consul-General, and had a ride in an auto-car.[1] . . ."

Oct. 10. Feeling very seedy and strain of work tremendous. Telegrams pouring in both from London and Pretoria. Rhodes had meeting of League to-day and made a long speech. I saw him in the afternoon. Later on I had a long conversation with Schreiner. . . . Worked up to a late hour. . . .

Rhodes had just come down from the north. The embarrassing weakness of the Government led to a discussion as to the advisability of a general election. But Rhodes, so Sir Alfred learned from Mr. Iwan Müller, was strongly opposed to a general election, and, although sure of the support of forty-three Progressives and at least six members of the Opposition, he was almost equally opposed to the idea of succeeding to the Premiership himself. But he was ready to do so, if it proved absolutely necessary. He was hoping that Federation might be carried in the present House, and was deeply anxious to secure the "upper limit" for Northern Rhodesia. He proposed therefore to support, and, if possible, to stiffen Sprigg's Ministry (Milner Papers, XXVII, iii, 32).

[1] The first in South Africa.

Extract from Diary.

Oct. 12. . . . I decided in the morning to start for Pretoria to-night and had a first-class rush to get through. . . .

At Naauwpoort and Colesberg Boer commandos were reported to be threatening the line at numerous points, and it seemed probable that the High Commissioner's train would be stopped. There was a skirmish at Jagersfontein Road, just before he arrived, and after several delays, he was "hung up at Kroonstad for the night." Arriving at Pretoria on the 15th, the High Commissioner, although hindered by a slight attack of illness, devoted long days there and at Johannesburg to consultations with Roberts, Kitchener, Maxwell, Baden-Powell, Ian Hamilton and other generals and heads of departments, in which "the main lines are marked out for the immediate future" (*Diary*, Oct. 16). He visited Prince Christian Victor in hospital.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

16/10/00. . . . Pretoria has been a revelation indeed. *Chaos* is a mild term for the state of things here, as regards civilian business. . . . Pretoria is a lovely little spot—of water, trees and gardens, ruined by the most *horrible* vulgarities of the 10th rate continental villadom — German architecture of the Bismarckian era at its worst. . . .

On the 25th Sir Alfred left for Bloemfontein; at Kroonstad the train was stopped, as the Boers had cut the line near Ventersburg Road. Piloted by an armoured train, the High Commissioner and his staff arrived at Bloemfontein on the 26th. Interviews followed with Generals Pretyman, Kelly Kenny, Hunter, Sir Godfrey Lagden, J. G. Fraser, and other "local lights"; and here, as in the Transvaal, arrangements were made for the institution of civilian administration. Sir Alfred also had the satisfaction of inaugurating the South African Constabulary under Major-General Baden-Powell.

His departure for Cape Town on November 1 was delayed by a "blow-up on the line near Kaffir River."

Extract from Diary.

Nov. 1. . . . Our journey was a curious one. At one point we were preceded by a construction train and a pilot engine, and followed by the armoured train and another train bearing several companies of guards. Our journey, however, was peaceful and uninterrupted. . . .

Army Reform and Imperial Federation.

Both the early reverses and subsequent experiences of the Boer War revealed the shortcomings of the old War Office, then housed in that extraordinary rabbit-warren of a building in Pall Mall, and the deficiencies of the military system. The Cardwell system of reserves had proved successful beyond expectation ; transport and supply had been marvellously organized ; but the technical training of officers and the marksmanship of the rank and file were shown to be lamentably inefficient. There was an evident lack of co-operation between the great departments. Milner, and several of Milner's most intimate friends—Lyttelton Gell, Sir Clinton Dawkins, Sir Henry Birchenough and others—striking whilst the iron was hot, began to agitate for army reform and efficiency in administration. An Administrative Reform Association, widely and influentially backed, was launched by the Editor of the *Nineteenth Century* (Sir James Knowles). The nation, instructed largely by the writings of Spenser Wilkinson, was eager for reform. The lessons so learned were taken to heart. Soldiers who had received early promotion for efficiency displayed during the war got to work at the War Office. The reforms which were instituted and carried out during the next ten years produced the incomparable Expeditionary Force, a highly intelligent Staff, the Committee of Imperial Defence, and Territorial army, without which the war of 1914 would inevitably have been lost.

Extract from Letter. Mr. Lyttelton Gell to Sir A. Milner.

8/6/00. . . . Last mail brought me your most interesting screed of May 12 *re* Imperial Federation and Army Reform. . . . It seems to me that we are feeling our way to an Imperial Staff Corps for officers, in which Regimental Officers will spend a certain time and learn real business. . . .

Extract from Letter. (Sir) Henry Birchenough to Sir A. Milner.

7/8/00. . . . What a six months it has been. . . . I can't think how you have lived through it. . . . It has been hard enough for simple citizens at home—but you with the whole weight of it, and in a sense the whole responsibility of it on your shoulders, it must have been frightful. . . . Your popularity, the belief in you, the conviction of your strength and wisdom is unbounded. . . . I hope the knowledge that the country has never at any time faltered in its confidence in you has been a great consolation. . . .

It has been truly wonderful. . . . I often think of the Zulu war and the Majuba war, and compare Bartle Frere's fortune with yours. Our fellow-countrymen really have improved since our young days. . . . My newest work is the XIXth Century. . . . [*Sir J.*] Knowles is tremendously keen on the two questions, War Office Reform and Imperial Federation. . . . We are working up an Association with Rosebery at its head to promote "administrative reform," which means "War Office" reform. . . . Dear Excellency, you are sadly needed at home. I know South Africa must retain you for a time. . . . But the Empire is more important than any one part of it. . . . The spirit of our people is high enough and resolute enough to carry the country through all that lies before it, but we need a leader—someone who will speak a plain word. All the old leaders—except perhaps Chamberlain—are tarred with the brush of old controversies ; their feet are leaden with old ideas ; they lag behind the man in the street, instead of giving him a definite lead, and yet that is all the man in the street asks of them. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Spenser Wilkinson to Sir A. Milner.

7/2/01. . . . The interaction and interdependence of policy and military action, including all forms of preparation for war, is now so profound that a national policy is impossible without a nation armed ; and in this country even the idea of either one or the other has not yet dawned upon the ruling class. . . . I do not see what will set us right except a frank acceptance of the principle of a duty to fight, which means that every man must receive a soldier's training. That granted, the question is whether the Volunteer and Militia systems of training if combined would not serve our turn. If we make every man at 20 begin to attend drills once a week in the evening, and go to a camp of exercise once a year for a month, I think we should do as well as the foreigner, provided we make first-rate schools for the officers and find out how to get first-rate non-commissioned officers. The centre of the whole matter is the education of the head officers and of the men of Govt., but how can this be set about ? I don't know who is to teach them. The difficulty is, that existing secondary education hardly gives the officer class a sufficient basis of knowledge and method to enable the young officers to educate themselves as regards war, just as the politicians for the most part do not give themselves any real training as regards policy. One satisfactory feature of the two years has been that the home public and the Govt. seem at last to have found out that they must back you. . . . I congratulate you without reserve, on all you have done and left undone (not the least

valuable part), since I saw you. Your purpose has been high; you have held to it finely; your acts and words have seemed to me instinct with judgment; your silence golden. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Brodrick (Lord Midleton) to Sir A. Milner.

3/11/00. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . I do not suppose I shall ever have a more trying task than now lies before me. You know the state of the Army in Africa; and the consequent disorganization at home. Everyone is urgent for reform, and yet is beginning to cry out at the expense. . . . But I am inspired by your brave words at our memorable banquet, and by your example. If I had Cromer's prestige, I should get a chance of having my innovations believed in—as it is, I must try and make people believe I am right as I go along. But there will be, I think, to people like yourself symptoms of a changed hand before long. All I ask is—write freely and frankly as to anything you want and as to people you don't want. If I can serve you, I will. The present idea is to leave K. with you till the affair gets smaller; then Lyttelton. Does this commend itself to you? Are more stringent measures possible to bring the war to an end? Confiscation of farms where arms, etc., are found concealed and the like? I believe we shall get support in any necessary measures. . . .

Liberal Imperialists at home were at this time much concerned about the future of their party and the Empire. They dreaded the prospect that, as the result of reaction from the war and blunders by the Unionist Government, the Liberal Party would be returned to power whilst still dominated by the Pro-Boer and Little-Englander section. Mr. Brassey and others were looking for a policy on which all Liberals could unite under an Imperial-minded leader like Lord Rosebery. Brassey began to prosecute a campaign for Imperial Federation accompanied by Devolution, involving the establishment of an Imperial Parliament, including representatives from the Colonies, to deal with Imperial questions, such as foreign policy and defence, whilst leaving local Parliaments to deal with local questions. He invited Milner's co-operation in this propaganda.[1]

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to the Hon. T. A. Brassey.

25/2/01. . . . With your general objects I sympathize, as you know, most fully. There are probably no two men who are more

[1] "A Policy on which all Liberals may Unite." Pamphlet by the Hon. T. A. (subsequently Lord) Brassey, Dec., 1900.

fully agreed in their general view of Imperial policy. . . . It is clear to me that we require separate organs to deal with local home business, and with Imperial business. The attempt to conduct both through one so-called Imperial Parliament is breaking down, and every year will make the inadequacy of the machinery more injurious in the interests of the State. . . . And, granted that we must have separate Parliaments for Imperial and Local business, I have been coming by a different road, and for somewhat different reasons, to the conclusion which you also are heading for, viz. : that it would be better not to create a new body *over* the so-called Imperial Parliament, but, if I may so express myself, to create new bodies, or a new body, *under* it for the local business of Great Britain and Ireland, leaving it to deal with the wider questions of Foreign Policy, the Defence of the Empire, and the relations of its several parts. In that case, of course, the Colonies would have to be represented in the Imperial Parliament, which would thus become really Imperial. One great difficulty, no doubt, is that, if this body were to be really effective as an instrument of Imperial Policy, it would require to be much reduced in numbers. This seems to me to be a greater obstacle than the question of bringing the Colonies in. Some of the Colonies would, I believe, come in at once, if offered an opportunity of seats in proportion, or even rather out of proportion, to the contribution they are prepared to make to the Imperial expenditure, and, if one were to lead the way, I believe the others would rapidly follow suit. The reduction in the number of British members might no doubt be facilitated by the creation of local legislatures, as the number of men interested in these, and fit to deal with local questions, is enormously greater than the number who are in any way fit to deal with Imperial questions—though I am afraid some of our friends hardly realize this. The time is ripe to make a beginning, and, if you are able in the next year or two to get a sufficient number of men to preach this doctrine within the Liberal Party (and I believe that, with your energy and knowledge of the subject, you can do much), it would give that Party an unrivalled opportunity of doing a big thing, should it, as is not improbable, return to power in a few years hence. I wish Rosebery, who could carry through such a policy if any man could, was less pessimistic. . . .

Sir Alfred was early and more immediately concerned with the distribution of troops in South Africa. He wished to see the Cape Colony used not only as the camp for the bulk of a garrison of some 30,000 men for some years to come, but also as a training ground for Imperial troops. This scheme was ardently pressed

later on (*v.* Ch. X). In subsequent memoranda he emphasized the necessity of stationing troops in the north and remote north-west—a district which was almost entirely inhabited by ex-rebels and their sympathizers, and in which British authority was represented by a mere handful of policemen, whose number the Cape Ministry, in face of the Bond majority, dared not propose to increase. The presence of even a small garrison there, would, he thought, give such a stiffening to the police and scattered loyalists as would alter the whole situation.[1]

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lord Roberts.

21/6/00. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . I suppose even now the Government at home is consulting you as to the number of men who should be left as a garrison for the next year or two, and the places where they are to be stationed. These are military problems on which I do not feel justified in expressing opinion. But they have also a political side, on which I may be allowed to put in a word. I have a strong feeling in favour of keeping our main South African garrison in the Colony, and preferably in the north of the Colony. It must, of course, be at some convenient point or points on the railway line, for purposes of supply, and also for purposes of quick movement in case of need.

The reason why I advocate the Colony is that I believe this will shortly be the only disaffected part of South Africa. Natal and Rhodesia are all right now, the Transvaal is bound to become so, if we do not make a too awful muddle of its government. The immigration of a large industrial and commercial population will surely result in that. The Orange River Colony, though Dutch, will not, I think, be very unfriendly, especially if, as I hope, we seize the unrivalled opportunity it affords for horse-breeding for military purposes. But in the Cape Colony the party of sedition will carry on the struggle until they see it is absolutely hopeless. A large force in Cape Colony will have the double effect of overawing disaffection, where it is likely to be most serious, and of slowly modifying the composition of the population. In the case of every large occupying army in a Colony fit for Europeans to live in, a certain proportion take their discharge in the country and stay there. Nothing could be better for us in this Colony than a greater admixture of men, or the descendants of men, who have served the Queen. It is very remarkable in the present struggle how many of our best Colonial loyalists have been the descendants

[1] Memorandum to Major Hanbury Williams, 27/12/00; Letter to Lord Roberts, 8/10/00. Milner Papers, XLV, i, 97.

of old officers or soldiers, or have been in the army themselves long ago.

If we have for some time to come to keep a considerable army in the Colony, is it necessary that it should be an idle army, a mere garrison? Are not many places—on the line—especially in the north-east of the Colony, ideal places for camps of exercise? I am thinking of such neighbourhoods as those of Naauwpoort, Colesberg, Aliwal, Stormberg, or even De Aar (though De Aar is perhaps too arid). In most of these there is a good grass country with any amount of room and a great diversity of country—ideal ground, in its expanse, variety, and naturalness, for training troops, especially mounted infantry—at least so it appears to my lay mind. And the horses would be there in quantities too, if we used our present opportunities, hardy and cheap. And the climate is good and developing. Boys would be made into men faster than elsewhere, to judge from what I have seen myself. And then it is central for an Empire, which is hardly likely to engage in European wars, but which may at any time have to reinforce its regular garrison in India or the further East. If the Suez Canal were ever blocked, it might make a great difference to us to be able to send 10,000 men quickly to India. It has always been an idea of mine that we should be killing two birds with one stone, if we did some of our army training in South Africa. Overcrowded England is becoming more and more impossible, while Cape Colony with an Aldershot or Curragh in it would in another generation be as loyal as any Colony. We have after all only a small European population and the British element is already 2/5ths. With such a gradual leavening as the constant presence of a field army would cause, the scale would soon be turned in their favour. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Roberts to Sir A. Milner.

4/7/00. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . Let me say how delighted I am that you are to be my successor here. There could not possibly be a more suitable arrangement, and the country is to be congratulated on your being able to accept such an extremely important position. . . . Lord Lansdowne has been in communication with me about the number of troops to be left in this country on the first withdrawal of the main army, and as to the officer I think best fitted to be left in command. For some time to come Pretoria, Johannesburg, and Bloemfontein will have to be held in considerable strength. By degrees, as the country settles down and an efficient police force is established, it will no doubt be possible to make a sensible reduction in the number of troops, but in the first instance I would not recommend there being less than 30,000 or

40,000 men. Most of these should be Imperial Service troops, but a certain proportion should, I think, be local. It would not be wise for all to be Imperial, as they might be withdrawn in the event of any great national emergency—a danger to which a local force would not be liable. With regard to the officer best fitted to command in South Africa when I leave, I would name Kitchener, but I am aware that he looks to India for a career, and I am under the impression that he will be given a high appointment in that country when the war is over. Failing Kitchener, I would recommend Ian Hamilton or Neville Lyttelton. . . . For head of the Military police and of any local troops that may be raised, Baden-Powell is far and away the best man I know. He possesses in quite an unusual degree the qualities you specify, viz. " energy, organization, knowledge of the country, and a power of getting on with its people." As a member of the Government you would find Baden-Powell most useful. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lord Roberts.

10/7/00. . . . Our agreement is remarkable. For the South African Command I thought first of Kitchener, but understanding that he had better prospects elsewhere, I then thought of the two very men you mention. . . .

Milner's Plan of Campaign.

With the change in the character of the war from a series of big military movements to the chasing of roving bands throughout a vast area of country, the political aspect of the situation became of increasing consequence. The High Commissioner held that whilst war, properly so called, was in progress, politicians must be silent upon the conduct of military affairs. But with the breaking up of the enemy's army, he felt that it was his duty to urge the political aspect of future operations. He therefore made clear to Lord Roberts by a memorandum in September, and to Lord Kitchener in conversation at Bloemfontein, that, in his opinion, the holding of certain districts and the establishing of settled government were preferable to the scouring of a much larger area. Admittedly, the country could not be subjugated by sitting still in certain positions, without using mobile forces to operate between them. But mere marching up and down, without holding on to the principal places when taken, was useless. The abandonment of towns once occupied was encouraging to the enemy, as the rebel Press proved ; their continued occupation gave confidence to those who wished to join us. On the other hand the " scouring

process" involved a fearful amount of destruction, which was adding to the legacy of trouble that would be left. For these reasons he advocated the "gradual securing of each district before tackling the next, and slowly occupying the country, bit by bit, rather than rapidly and repeatedly scouring it."

He was anxious to see the country as far as Pretoria thrown open for business as soon as possible. Believing that the wild and unhealthy districts of the remote north and north-east would take a long time to subjugate, and might well be left to themselves for a time, he argued that the correct policy was to hold on to the main points which had been secured, and to spread outwards from our borders until all the intervening country was one solid block of British territory (Milner Papers, XLV, i, 86. 13 and 21/9/00).

His visit to Bloemfontein in October had convinced him that the bulk of the Dutch population was anxious enough to settle down, if assured of protection. He wrote to this effect to Kitchener, suggesting the "policy of protected areas,"—resolute holding of a dozen towns or positions outside Bloemfontein with good infantry,—no difficult matter in view of the disinclination of the Boers to press an attack against a well-entrenched force. Pivoting on such posts, and aided by information supplied by them, mounted troops could operate against roving bands and proceed with the task of clearing the country. At present, small scattered bands of the enemy were doing an amount of damage quite out of proportion to their numbers. His scheme might be tried out in the southern part of the Orange River Colony, and afterwards extended, if it proved successful.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lord Kitchener.

31/10/00. . . . At any rate I am in favour of trying that plan in the southern corner of the Orange River Colony. If it succeeds there, we shall keep the guerilla warfare from spreading to the Colony, and give an object lesson which will affect other districts. I should take all the houses I could lay my hands on, but I should *burn no houses*, except for definite acts of treachery, nor should I attempt to clear the district of food-stuffs or of population. Instead of rounding up the cattle, I should turn all my energies to chivying the marauders, and in that enterprise I believe it would be possible gradually to associate some of the inhabitants with us. . . . In any district once cleared of the enemy, garrisoned and policed, I think we should be fully entitled to proclaim war over, thereafter to shoot marauders, that is to say any small bodies of men who might be caught under arms not belonging to anything which

could be called a regular military force. I am going to draft a Proclamation on these lines for your consideration.

I believe if we were to devastate all South Africa—an impossibility anyway—we should only find that we had a greater number of roving blackguards to deal with than ever. The men on commando would always manage to pick up something, if only from the Kaffirs. On the other hand, if by concentrating our efforts we could absolutely subjugate certain areas, and screen the people in them *in their usual occupations*, from molestation from without, we should dishearten the enemy and encourage the waverers to come to us. Every step in that direction would make the next step easier. Wherever we are firmly in possession, I should also try to form Committees of local men to work for peace, by sending out emissaries into neighbouring districts to point out the advantage of submission, and create a local opinion in its favour, and in such settled districts I should *guarantee* compensation for any loss inflicted by such marauders, if there were any, as might despite all our efforts to protect them occasionally effect an entrance.

It is for the same sort of reason that I want to get the refugees back to Johannesburg, not all at once, of course, but a selected number of them, and to begin restarting the industry. I still think that nothing would more convince the Boers of the futility of further resistance. I cannot see that it is impracticable, for at an immense expenditure of strength we do now succeed in keeping the railway working, despite all interruptions, and this we must in every case and at whatever cost continue to do. But if we must keep it working, we may as well use it to the full, and so using it, we could quite easily feed twice the population we now do on the Rand. This would be sufficient to set at least part of the mines at work, and even if they could not work at all, it would be better to support the people in their own homes, as volunteers on our side, than to support them as we are now doing as mutinous grumblers, at the ports. They would replace a certain number of soldiers in the former, whereas in the latter they will shortly require additional soldiers to keep them in order. I quite recognize our difficulty about this—the objection which is felt by the Johannesburgers already in the field to such a proceeding. But if that could be got over, I see no other difficulty. And if it could only be got over by letting the Johannesburgers, who are now in the field, go home, I believe it would be worth while to do so. I think that within one month of their return and that of 20,000 British Uitlanders now in the Colony, you would be able to raise 3 times as many men on the Rand as you now have Randites serving with the colours, and would be

able to hold, not only the Rand itself, but the surrounding districts with Uitlander corps. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

29/10/00. . . . The next stage—Kitchener in supreme command of the Army and me "administering" in my capacity of High Commissioner, the two ex-Republics, till a regular government can be established—that, also, is not an easy position. Kitchener! It is fortunate that I admire him in many ways so much, and admiring, am prepared to stand a lot and never take offence. . . . I am determined to get on with him, and I think he likes me and has some respect for me, if he has for anybody. But shall I be able to manage this strong, self-willed man "in a hurry" (for he is dying to be off in time to take India), and to turn his enormous power into the right channel? At present he is wasting himself utterly, partly because he has not command, partly also because, as he frankly confesses, he has no plan, is puzzled. *I have a plan*, but as yet he is unconvinced, or rather not sufficiently convinced. . . . If once I could get him on to the right lines, *he has the ability* to put it all through.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

28/10/00. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . I have no wish to be a pessimist. I believe as firmly as ever that we shall come out all right and this will in the long run be a prosperous country and a source of strength to the Empire. But the immediate prospect is very cloudy. Our progress these last few weeks has been truly crablike. I did not start from Cape Town in a very cheerful humour, but I own that, now that I have safely run the gauntlet to Pretoria and back, I am fairly taken aback at the vitality and ubiquity of the enemy, the staleness and dissatisfaction of our men, and the aimlessness and inconsequence of our present operations. The most serious feature of the situation is that the Irregular Corps right through, whether S. African or overseas Colonials, are tired of the war, and feeling that the "hope deferred" of being allowed to return to their homes and businesses, which has been encouraged by the discharge of the C.I.V.'s, and of a few of their own number, makes the heart very sick indeed. . . . The discontent of the S. African volunteers, and especially of the Rand men who form a very large proportion of the various irregular corps (I.L.H., Bethune's, Thorneycroft's, Brabant's, etc.), is taking a more immediately inconvenient form.

A few days ago we were quite ready to allow the refugees to begin to return to the Rand, but the outcry this excited among

their fellows, still serving with the army, who thought that they had the right to return first, was so great that Headquarters hastily withdrew the permission they had already given. The consequence is that, while the volunteers continue to hug their grievance, the disappointed refugees at Cape Town and other parts are becoming mutinous, and this is hardly surprising. They have been out of work and home for more than a twelve-month and are now in many cases in great destitution. They have behaved on the whole with admirable patience, but this last blow has been too much for them, and there is a small but noisy gang of Radical agitators amongst them, carefully nursed by the *S.A. News* and our Colonial rebels generally, who are fishing in troubled waters and trying to get up an "anti-capitalist" row on this occasion, though the socialism of Johannesburg is in reality the hollowest sham in the world. Nothing could, in fact, be more ridiculous than to pretend that "capitalists," who are more interested than anybody else in the return of the working population, are responsible for the delay, or that Lord Roberts, or I, are in the very smallest degree under "capitalistic" influences. But in the sore-headed condition of the refugees at this moment, any nonsense gains a certain amount of credence. I may be able to appease them a bit when I get back to Cape Town, for on the whole I have been wonderfully lucky in keeping them patient so long (it has not been without taking much trouble), but *for* very much longer I don't think any amount of "soft sawder" will keep them from becoming very restive, and the worst of it is that the whole trouble is so unnecessary.

If the Johannesburgers who are in arms only knew their own interest, they would see that the return of a well-selected number of refugees, who could start business and employ labour, would be favourable and not the reverse, to their own prospects, as they were discharged. The whole business is very instructive as showing the "reverse of the medal" in the case of Irregular Corps. They have done splendid service in this war, both African and Overseas Colonials. But they need to be humoured, and above all they must not be kept in the field *too long*. Under the circumstances, the only course seems to me to be "faire bonne mine au mauvais jeu," and to prepare to release the bulk of the Colonial forces at an early date with cordial thanks, counting to get back a good many of them, and these the keenest, as members of the Constabulary. Over the Constabulary, I have, as you will see from the telegrams, had a considerable fight, and been *Athanasius contra mundum*. It is not that I want to limit their numbers. Whatever the cost, we must have enough of them to stamp out the present guerilla warfare. But they cannot be got together in a

week. I could see no reason for fixing the strength, in the first instance, at more than we can possibly get together in the next six weeks. If we ask for 6,000 we may want 12,000. Plenty of time to call for the second 6,000 when we have got the first. But we may find that 6,000 are after all enough. How foolish we should look if we had committed ourselves to the enormous expense of 6,000 unnecessary men! It is the same with the pay. We must raise it, if five shillings a day does not get us the men we want. But *why* assume that that very big figure will not draw them? My own belief is that it will.

My struggle has been against absolute waste, not merely to save the exchequer of the new Colony. With regard to that I am not pedantic. Better have a deficit of a million your first year, than let the war go on one month longer than is necessary, for every additional month costs several millions for somebody. It is true that the big police force may be saving money to the army at the expense of the Colony. But this after all is more apparent than real. The Colony can only borrow a certain amount. If it has to take, say, a million out of loan, to make good the deficit of annual revenue caused by a police, really doing the work of the army, then it will have a million less to contribute towards the cost of the war. That contribution will, I fear, in any case be smaller than we once hoped. The immediate incidence of the charge seems to me a matter of minor importance. The great thing is to keep the cost of the war, enormous in any case, from being greater than it need be.

Given a strong mounted police, perpetually on the move, and pivoting upon a number of strongly entrenched bases, garrisoned with infantry and filled with supplies, we ought to be able to hold at once a considerable area in each of the Ex-Republics, and to substitute within that area, the policy of protection for that of reprisal. The plan of flying columns marching up and down the country, destroying much but holding little, has not been crowned with success. I am not now speaking of the original big dashes, by which we captured all the places of importance and main strategic points. These were splendidly conceived and executed, and it was worth neglecting everything else to make them, to seize Bloemfontein and Pretoria, save the mines and gain possession of the railway lines. But after that I could never see what we gained by overrunning big tracts of country, without permanently occupying them. In any case the time has now come, when we must make up our minds to slowly and gradually subjugate and hold one district after another. It is no use merely marching through, even if you do it three times over. The Boers simply slip round you and get back again, and with this eternal see-saw

everything in the country—which after all is going to be *our* country—is totally ruined. . . .

We have appropriated, by Proclamation, an enormous country. We have yet to appropriate it *in facto* by gradual conquest. All my information goes to show that the better-to-do farmers are sick of the struggle. The bands roaming about the country are the landless men, the remaining foreigners, under a few reckless leaders, who know that their hour has struck. What we have now to do is slowly but surely to screen off one district after another, from these marauders, not to devastate it, thereby turning the well-to-do peaceable men against us, but to protect it, thus ensuring their acquiescence, possibly in the long run even their active support.

There is one other point in this programme, to which I attach great importance. I am anxious gradually to bring back the exiled population to the Rand, and to restart business there, even if guerilla bands are still roaming about many parts of the country, and occasionally cutting the line. It seems to me, that nothing could more completely demonstrate our mastery or show the Boers the hopelessness of further resistance than to begin work again in spite of them. . . . At present the idea of running the mines again while the enemy is still dancing all over the country is of the nature of a heresy. So we give the Boers the satisfaction of feeling that, though we have taken their El Dorado, they can prevent our getting any good out of it. I don't believe that it is necessary to give them that satisfaction. I state my views not expecting to be able to carry them out in their entirety at any rate at first, but wishing to show you on what lines I propose to work, as soon as I can wind up affairs at the Cape and get back to the vicinity of Headquarters.

CHAPTER V

The Second Rebellion in the Cape Colony

DURING the last fortnight of November, Sir Alfred noted in his *Diary* that the state of the Colony was "growing steadily worse" (Nov. 19); "very bad and reports alarming" (Nov. 26); "extraordinarily bad" (Nov. 29). On December 1 he sent a strong Minute to his Ministers upon the state of the country. But he could not induce the Cabinet, weak, divided, and "demoralized by a Bond-ridden Parliament," either to reintroduce Martial Law or to prohibit the approaching Worcester Congress (Nov. 24–Dec. 4).

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

14/11/00. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . What I chiefly wish to refer to to-day is the state of the Colony. This is King Charles's head indeed. I know you have thought me a pessimist. But I am sorry to say that every week that passes convinces me more and more that *the system is an impossible one.* It is really appalling to see how we have gone back since last Easter. Then—with the rebellion just suppressed, people were beginning to get sick of sedition. It only needed quiet steady grind, no violence, the prompt, noiseless, even if lenient, punishment of rebels and the suppression of perpetual appeals to racial hatred and prejudice, to keep the bulk of the farming population in this better frame of mind. But the unbridled licence of Press and pulpit, and above all the unchecked extravagance of the rebel party in the Assembly have altered the whole tone of the country population. They all would be rebels again, almost to a man, in something like the old condition of what an experienced official calls "national hysteria," and only shortness of ammunition is preventing a fresh rising, especially in those central districts which have had no experience of what war means. The passing of the Treason Bill was, no doubt, in a way a triumph, but it was only achieved by great sacrifices on the part of a shaky Ministry, by sops to the cross benches, and above all by a meek and apologetic attitude, in the face of the quite outspoken treason of the other side, which created the worst impression. Having once discovered

that violence and defiance pay, the extreme people are indulging in a violent Saturnalia of them. The Press is writing with extreme virulence and explosive speeches are becoming the order of the day. In every district firebrands are roaming about and I have no doubt whatever that, if any small commando were to slip through, it would find adherents in almost every part of the Colony. The Ministry are hopelessly weak. I do not mean to say that it would be easy to deal with a general passive rebellion, however strong Ministers were. But the situation is certainly exaggerated by their helplessness. The situation is in my judgment so critical, that I may have to make proposals of a somewhat drastic character to you by telegraph before this letter arrives. I hope not, but I feel sure that, if anything has to be done, it will require to be a step of a very decisive character, such as the General Proclamation of Martial Law and the formation of Town Guards and District Guards in every part of the country under the Imperial authorities.[1] . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

5/12/00. . . . We have reached a very interesting point in this everlasting see-saw and the next week will, I think, finally decide whether we are to have further disturbances in the Colony. The position is precisely this. The leaders of the Bond party—journalists . . . and parsons . . . *en tête*—have been doing everything they can to excite the feelings of the people. The violence and mendacity of their talking and writing are something extraordinary. I doubt whether they wanted a rising. They wanted to bluff us into agreeing to a semi-independence of the Republics, round which the shattered fabric of Afrikander supremacy could slowly be built up again, by giving us an object-lesson of the irreconcilable temper of the Colonial Dutch. Now they see that we won't be bluffed, and are beginning to be frightened—some of them, at any rate—at the furious passions they have themselves engendered, and are backing water as hard as they can. Merriman and Sauer—see their speeches at Stellenbosch on Saturday—are evidently on this tack. Personally I consider it is just the toss of a coin, whether we have a conflagration or not. Accident will probably decide it. If in the next week anything further goes wrong in the Orange River Colony (that last *surrender* has much to answer for), or if there is any untoward accident in the Colony, a row is certain. Otherwise we may just squeak through.

Of course it is *criminal* to run these frightful risks. But that is the inevitable result of the system. "Responsible Govern-

[1] For Chamberlain's reply, see Ch. V, p. 180, and Ch. VI, p. 182.

ment" in war-time in a country where the majority is hostile to you cannot work. Ministers, weak enough in any case, are hopelessly demoralized by the fear of what a Bond-ridden Parliament might say to them, if they were to proclaim martial law. Hence, while the districts under it are, on the whole, quiet, the whole west and centre of the Colony, where public meetings are free, agitators move about freely, and incendiary publications are circulated without restriction, is just seething with rebellion. If they had only got ammunition, which I have *quite illegally and despite the constant murmurings of "constitutional advisers"* kept away from them, they would be up to a certainty. As it is there is more ammunition than I like in Government stores at certain places, and the people have a certain amount here and there, carefully stored up from ante-war days.

Of course it is perfectly monstrous to allow the mass meeting at Worcester. It is not that I expect anything to happen *at the meeting*, and the speeches will doubtless be in the usual tone of sham moderation with an undercurrent of sedition and *menace*. But these gatherings all help to keep the pot boiling, and they also give an admirable opportunity for the "physical force section" to meet in secret conventicles, under cover of the public general meeting, and plot concerted action. I did my best to push Ministers into proclaiming Martial Law in the Western and Central Districts a week ago, and nearly succeeded. It would then have been in plenty of time to stop this meeting and much other mischief, which we must now run the risk of. But the constitutionalism of Innes and the opportunism of Sprigg combined were too strong, and I could only have carried my point by provoking a crisis. Two of the Ministers [1] were anxious to resign as a protest against what they consider the criminal negligence of their colleagues in letting things go on, but I have persuaded them to stay, as I want, if it is possible without inviting a general rebellion, to avoid a rupture, and I may at the last moment bring Innes over.

It is certain that *the whole loyal population* are with me in this matter, and Sprigg would be left without six followers in the country, and even Sprigg and Innes would not together command more than a few hundreds. But, of course, the impression made by a split in the British camp, even if the division was 50,000 to 100, would be bad, and must be avoided *at almost any cost*. Innes, of course, behaves, even in these grave differences, like a gentleman. Sprigg, equally, of course, behaves as a weak . . . man might be expected to, in a crisis. . . . I see the pro-Boer game at home now is to urge *immediate confederation* under the British

[1] Dr. Smartt and T. L. Graham.

flag, with a quasi-independence of the Republics. I have not the least doubt that you will turn a deaf ear to this latest dodge, supported though it may be by the very natural weariness of the public at the hateful prolongation of the war. From my point of view, of course, any such concession would be fatal. We cannot help this being a bad business, but we can absolutely, by inflexibly persevering to the end, prevent our ever having such another. . . .

The leniency with which the crime of rebellion was to be punished according to the Treason Act (Oct. 12) may well be thought excessive. No doubt it was due in part to the desire to avoid bitterness after a war which was then regarded as practically over. Neither it, nor the withdrawal of Martial Law, was justified by results. Directly after the capture of Pretoria, Ministers had pressed the Governor to withdraw Martial Law in the proclaimed Districts (June 6). Sir Alfred consented to withdraw it first in the Cathcart, Queenstown, and Glen Grey districts, and subsequently from the Molteno (August 16) and Steynsburg and Britstown districts (Oct. 11). At the same time he summarized the facts, so as to show that charges against the military authorities of arbitrary use of their powers were without foundation :

Minute by Sir A. Milner.

. . . Except while the rebellion was actually in full swing, nobody has been tried for acts of rebellion or treason by military courts. Even when the rebels were under arms by thousands, the number of persons so tried was exceedingly small, and as soon as rebellion was stamped out in any quarter, trial by military courts (except for breaches of mere disciplinary regulations, involving trifling punishment) was entirely suspended. Scores of rebels have been captured in fight, thousands have surrendered their arms, but there are not six persons at present in prison in this Colony who have been confined and sentences passed on them by military courts for acts of rebellion. No single rebel has been put to death, and the heaviest punishment inflicted on any of them at the hands of the military is two years' imprisonment with a fine of £1,000. The persons arrested by the military for high treason—with very few exceptions—have either been brought to trial before the ordinary tribunals of the land, or they are detained pending the decision of Parliament on the proposal to establish a special court to deal with their cases.

The High Commissioner kept himself fully informed of the treasonable sayings and doings of a large section of the Dutch

Afrikanders and Ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church (Milner Papers, XLVII, iii). Already in September, Sir Alfred had found it necessary to express his opinion freely to the Prime Minister as to the way in which Messrs. Merriman and Sauer were allowed to insult the Secretary of State and himself.

But Ministers were weak, the Premier was complacent. On December 5 Sir Gordon Sprigg assured the High Commissioner that there was no occasion for alarm. The Prime Minister availed himself of the opportunity to observe that the accuracy with which he had hitherto gauged coming events could only be explained by supposing him to be possessed of extraordinary powers of intuition, heightened by long experience of public affairs. Nor was his brain power ever disturbed by " nerves " (Milner Papers, XXVII, iii, 425). This happy combination of qualities, however, proved of little avail upon the present occasion.

For, a fortnight later, a fresh outbreak of rebellion following upon the invasion of the Colony by Hertzog and Kritzinger (Dec. 16), necessitated the re-imposition of Martial Law. Step by step, between December 20 and January 17, it was extended to the whole Colony, excepting the Cape ports, Wynberg and the native districts. Feeling among the Dutch Afrikanders had been roused to fever heat by the speeches of the Opposition in the Cape Parliament, the recrudescence of war upon the borders, and by the libellous propaganda of the Dutch Press. Sir Alfred wrote (Cd. 547, p. 57) : " Never in my life have I read of, much less experienced, such a carnival of mendacity as that which accompanied the pro-Boer agitation in this Colony." [1]

A violent campaign of infamous calumny against British troops and Generals,[2] prepared an inflammatory atmosphere for the meeting of the People's Congress. Nor was it without support from politicians and journalists at home.

W. T. Stead,[3] indeed, wrote to Sir Alfred Milner protesting

[1] One incident which led to a great deal of misrepresentation took place at a garden party at this time. The High Commissioner was invited to bowl at some " Aunt Sallys." On reaching them he found that the " Aunt Sallys " had been got up as effigies of the leading Bond politicians and President Kruger. Confronted with this embarrassing choice, Sir Alfred bowled at Kruger.

[2] Cd. 547, No. 11 ; Cd. 903. Mr. A. Cartwright, Mr. Advocate Malan, Mr. de Jong and Mr. Vosloo, editors of the *South African News*, *Ons Land*, *The Worcester Advertiser*, and *Het Oosten*, were subsequently sentenced to terms of imprisonment for offences of this kind.

[3] See Vol. I, pp. 13, 20, 26.

against the prohibition of the circulation in South Africa of his "broadsheets" which, he said, were sent out for the purpose of "strengthening the bonds of Empire." "It seems to me," he added, "that you have sinned against the light, and wrecked our Empire by apostatizing from every principle you were believed to hold" . . .

The nature of those broadsheets is indicated by one which, in the form of a letter purporting to have been written by a British Officer in Command, alleged that Kitchener had issued secret instructions to the troops to take no prisoners, but to shoot down Boers who surrendered. Crude propaganda of this kind, however, did not always have the effect desired. Certainly, among President Steyn's papers which were captured in the field, copies of *Truth* were found, in which were marked passages wherein Mr. Labouchere urged the Boers to continue their resistance, in the hope of foreign intervention. But though Stead's lies were found "in almost every house" in the Cape Colony, Kitchener observed that "the result has been the reverse of what was anticipated. Instead of the Dutch being excited to take up arms against us, the exactly contrary effect has been produced, as they do not want the same 'horrors' near them." [1]

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

28/11/00. There goes to you in schedule a most important manifesto from the leaders of the Dutch Reformed Church in this Colony, which appeared in the *South African News* this morning.[2] . . . I would beg to refer you to my confidential letter of January 24, in which I anticipated that movement on the part of the Cape Dutch, of which this is the first open sign. "Whether our people will continue to bear the strain upon their loyalty, after the indignities to which many of them have been exposed since the beginning of the war," says the manifesto, "we cannot undertake to predict." A pretty clear hint. The fact is, of course, that it is simply a question of force. If we are strong enough *in the Colony*, while our main army is operating outside it, the Dutch will "continue to bear the strain." If not, not. Meanwhile this is the beginning of the big bluff which I always anticipated. "Stop fighting our friends, or else . . ." My opinion is absolutely unaltered, that now more than ever we cannot be dictated to in our Transvaal policy by the Cape Dutch, and that, in as quiet a way as possible, we must simply decline their interference. . . .

[1] *Ap.* Sir G. Arthur, "Life of Lord Kitchener," II, p. 27.

[2] Cf. Cd. 547, No. 22.

In the atmosphere thus prepared, the Worcester Congress met (Dec. 6). Resolutions were passed, that the highest interest of South Africa demanded the termination of the war, and the retention by the Republics of their independence. A second resolution desired " a full recognition of the right of the people of this Colony to manage its own affairs," and expressed grave disapproval of the policy pursued by Sir Alfred in this matter. A deputation was appointed to lay these resolutions before the High Commissioner, and to request him to bring them to the notice of H.M. Government. Sir Alfred received the deputation on Dec. 11, when Mr. W. P. de Villiers, a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, and M. J. Pretorius, member of the Legislative Council for Worcester, insisted that it was the devastation of property and treatment of Boer women and children which had stirred the resentment of the Dutch Afrikanders, and that, unless the independence of the Republics was restored, race feeling would prevail for generations (Cd. 547, No. 23). Sir Alfred's reply was as cool as it was deadly.

Sir Alfred Milner's reply to the Worcester Congress Deputation.

11/12/00. I accede to your request to bring these resolutions to the notice of H.M. Government. I think it is doubtful whether I ought to do so, but in view of the prevailing bitterness and excitement, it is better to err, if one must err, on the side of conciliation and fairness. And, having regard especially to the fact that one of the resolutions is directed against myself, I wish to avoid any appearance of a desire to suppress its companions on account of it. But, having gone thus far on the road of concession, I take the liberty, in no unfriendly and polemical spirit, of asking you quite frankly what good you think can be done by resolutions of this character? I am not now referring to the resolution against myself. That is a matter of very minor importance. The pith of the whole business is in resolution number one, a resolution evidently framed with great care by the clever men who are engineering the present agitation in the Colony. Now, that resolution asks for two things—a termination of the war, and the restoration of the independence of the Republics.

In desiring the termination of the war we are all agreed, but nothing can be less conducive to the attainment of that end, than to encourage in those who are still carrying on a hopeless resistance the idea that there is any, even the remotest chance, of the policy of the annexation being reversed. I am not now speaking for myself. This is not a question for me. I am simply directing your attention to the repeatedly declared policy of H.M. Govern-

ment, a policy just endorsed by an enormous majority of the nation, and not only by the ordinary supporters of the Government, but by the bulk of those ordinarily opposed to it. Moreover, that policy is approved by all the great self-governing colonies of the Empire, except this one, and in this one by something like half the white population, and practically the whole of the native. And this approving half of the white population, be it observed, embraces all those who, in the recent hour of danger, when this Colony itself was invaded and partially annexed, fought and suffered for the cause of Queen and Empire. I ask you, is it reasonable to suppose that H.M. Government is going back upon a policy deliberately adopted, repeatedly declared, and having this overwhelming weight of popular support throughout the Empire behind it? And if it is not, I ask you further: What is more likely to lead to a termination of the war,—a recognition of the irrevocable nature of this policy, or the reiteration of menacing protests against it? And there is another aspect in which I fear this resolution is little calculated to promote that speedy restoration of peace which we have all at heart. I refer to the tone of aggressive exaggeration which characterizes its allusions to the conduct of the war. No doubt the resolution is mild, compared with some of the speeches by which it was supported, just as those speeches themselves were mild compared with much that we are now too well accustomed to hear and to read, in the way of misrepresentation and abuse of the British Government, British statesmen, British soldiers, the British people.

But even the resolution, mild in comparison with such excesses, is greatly lacking in that sobriety and accuracy, which it is so necessary for all of us to cultivate in these days of bitterly inflamed passions. It really is preposterous to talk, among other things, about "the extermination of a white nationality," or to give any sort of countenance to the now fully exploded calumny about the ill-treatment of women and children. The war, gentlemen, has its horrors—every war has. Those horrors increase as it becomes more irregular on the part of the enemy, thus necessitating severer measures on the part of the Imperial troops. But, having regard to the conditions, it is one of the most humane wars that has ever been waged in history. It has been humane, I contend, on both sides, which does not, of course, mean that on both sides there have not been isolated acts deserving of condemnation. Still, the general direction, the general spirit, on both sides, has been humane. But it is another question whether the war on the side of the enemy is any longer justifiable. It is certainly not morally justifiable to carry on a resistance involving the loss of many lives and the destruction of an immense quantity of property, when the object of that resistance can no longer, by any possibility, be attained.

No doubt, great allowance must be made for most of the men still under arms, though it is difficult to defend the conduct of their leaders in deceiving them. The bulk of the men still in the field are buoyed up with false hopes. They are incessantly fed with lies—lies as to their own chance of success, and, still worse, as to the intention of the British Government with regard to them, should they surrender. And for that very reason it seems all the more regrettable that anything should be said or done here, which could help still further to mislead them, still further to encourage a resistance which creates the very evils that these people are fighting to escape. It is because I am sincerely convinced that a resolution of this character, like the meeting at which it was passed, like the whole agitation of which that meeting is part, is calculated, if it has any effect at all, still further to mislead the men who are engaged in carrying on this hopeless struggle, that I feel bound, in sending it to Her Majesty's Government, to accompany it with this expression of my strong personal dissent.

Five days later Boer forces crossed the Orange River. The fatal result of the Worcester Congress, in the words of the Burgher Peace Committee, " had been that the commandos again entered the Cape Colony."

Extract from Diary.

Dec. 30. Day of excessively bad news and great anxiety. Both the invading columns have got through into the Colony, one being now near Middelburg, and one between Carnarvon and Fraserburg. We have also had a bad reverse in the Transvaal at Helvetia. . . .

Dec. 31. I managed by a gigantic effort to galvanize people into activity to-day. Prolonged interviews with Sprigg, the General, and Rose Innes, finally resulting in a " call to arms " of all loyal inhabitants issued by the military. I am also pressing for Martial Law. . . .

At last, then, Ministers had been driven, by recurrent rebellions and the pressure of the Governor, to take those measures for the defence of the Colony, the application of Martial Law and the raising of a special Colonial Defence Corps, which he had been urging for over a year ; measures which, if taken over a year ago, would undoubtedly have helped to curtail the war and mitigate suffering.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

2/12/00. . . . The much-abused Uitlanders have once more played up in the most extraordinary manner. . . . I had been

led, by what bungling up country I know not, to making promises of immediate return which could not be fulfilled. . . . The Uitlanders were naturally mad with disappointment. . . . I managed, thanks largely to Ozzy, to get together a very good Committee, in which leading " capitalists " sat rubbing elbows with agitators of the working class, Jew and Gentile, shopkeeper and filibuster, the most odd assortment you ever saw. To them, taking my life in my hands, I stated plumply the exact truth. I explained the position, acknowledging the mistake which had been made (as *my* mistake, which it *wasn't*) ; revealed all the embarrassments of the situation, and appealed to them all to help me and one another out of it. " You can't go home, but you can go and be shot, if you like." That was the substance of it—and, Wonder of wonders ! it has been a complete success. The Uitlanders have never been so quiet, recruiting among them has never been so brisk, and I have never been so popular. To be popular with people, who have followed you into idleness, starvation, and terrible, repeated disappointment, is a strange experience—is it not? . . . I am touched by the confidence of people, whom one can do nothing for, and who have absolutely nothing to go upon, but their unshakable faith in one's good intentions and singlemindedness. I believed in them when everybody was maligning them, and Kruger's hired scribes were denouncing the whole crowd as Jews and money-grubbers with no soul above cent per cent. And I appealed to them now—in this tightest of corners—to their reason as men, not trying to cajole them as children. It has answered. But surely there is good stuff, when such a policy *can* answer under such circumstances. . . .

Same to Same.

27/12/00. . . . Kitchener has begun well. There is a remarkable increase of energy, and more sense in the military management all round. I think, that, owing to this, and to (*Col.*) Harold Grenfell (*Brabant's Horse*) . . . we have stayed the invasion of the Colony on the north-east. The west is still more doubtful. . . . Kitchener is absolutely autocratic. . . . But I don't mind that, *if he will only end the war.* I am quite willing to lie low and let my administratorship be a farce, until the country is pacified, if there is only progress in that direction. And I know that he wants to go as soon as he can—therefore I shall just possess my soul in patience, till he has finished his rough work in his own strong way and not interfere with him. My only fear is that he may make promises to people, to get them to surrender, which will be embarrassing afterwards to fulfill. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir A. Milner.

22/12/00. . . . I have received your letter of the 5th inst. with its account of the continued crisis in the affairs of the Cape Colony. . . . I hope and still believe that nothing in the nature of a serious rising will take place, but of course you have to face the possibility of all eventualities, and I appreciate the difficult position in which you are thus placed. Here I meet all doubts by reminding people of the old Yorkshire motto, " It's dogged as does it." I do not see the slightest sign that the people are in any way shaken or would permit the least deviation from our policy of " thorough." But the disorganization of the Opposition, and the extraordinary and to my mind disgraceful conduct of its leaders, may now produce misapprehension abroad and possibly even in South Africa ; you may rest assured, however, that as long as the present Government and the present Colonial Secretary are in office, there will be no going back nor yielding to any of the insidious suggestions of the men who seek to secure a position from which they may once more in the future endanger the British Empire in South Africa. I appreciate as fully as you can wish the continual difficulties in your path caused by the existence of responsible government under the circumstances of the Cape Colony ; but I cannot too seriously impress upon you the importance of working even with the imperfect instruments in our hands, rather than by revolutionary methods. Hitherto we have kept this country wholly with us. A false step might endanger our position, and although I am prepared to make every use of all the weapons in my hands, I am not yet inclined to throw up the game and go to Parliament for extraordinary and absolutely unprecedented powers.

I note that in view of the invasion your Government have at last proclaimed martial law over additional districts. I think you will be perfectly justified in taking the opportunity to deal severely with seditious publications and treasonable agitators. Meanwhile we are sending out more mounted men, and neither money nor effort will be spared on this side. How does De Wet get his remounts ? It seems to my uninstructed intelligence that we ought to have commandeered every single horse in every part of the country to which he has had access. We could pay for them or restore them after the war, but we ought not to leave behind, either in friendly or hostile hands, the means by which De Wet and other leaders can carry on their guerilla warfare. I think also it has been a great mistake to allow rebels who have been in arms to go on parole into disaffected parts of the Colony. I hope that this has been put a stop to, and that where any further rebellion is threatened or takes place the passes of these men will be with-

drawn. It would have been much better in my opinion if every man captured had been sent off at once to Ceylon or elsewhere.

I also agree with you in desiring the earliest possible establishment of some sort of nucleus, in which ordinary industry can go on, and which may spread out from a centre to the surrounding districts. Johannesburg is clearly the first place for such an operation. Could not the Uitlanders who are still serving from that neighbourhood be allowed to go back on condition that they are enrolled for service anywhere within a 20 or 30 mile radius? Then the bulk of the refugees could follow and the mines be set going. The inhabitants plus the Volunteers ought to be able to take care of themselves and protect the surrounding district against any inroad. In the same way I should have supposed that it might have been possible to establish forces at Bloemfontein and Pretoria, each with its own radius of protected country. Movable forces consisting of mounted troops would be detached to follow raiders anywhere, while inferior troops would be entrenched and fortified on the lines of communication, each separate body being able to hold its own for a given period of a week or a fortnight against any assault. All this may seem very foolish to those on the spot, especially as it is impossible to elaborate one's ideas in correspondence, but recent events have been so unsatisfactory that even an amateur may venture to offer suggestions. I am dying to hear that you have commenced some sort of civil administration anywhere in the two Colonies. I utterly distrust military administration, and believe that it is calculated to increase the number of our enemies and to exacerbate their hostile feelings. Even the most skeleton form of civil government is better than none, and would be an earnest to the world of our intention to carry out our ideas as they have been publicly declared.

In recent telegrams I have pressed you very much to issue a Proclamation defining a little more clearly our intentions with regard to the settlement and also as to the terms on which we are prepared to accept the surrender of the forces still in the field.[1] I understand that it may be impossible to deal with this matter while an invasion is actually in progress, but I beg of you not to lose sight of it, but to strengthen my hands as soon as possible by showing that we are not excessive in our demands, and that the prolongation of the war is not due to the unreasonableness of our conditions. It is constantly said here that the guerillas are men made desperate by ignorance of our real intentions, and that they will fight to the death, if they are driven into a corner without the possibility of surrender on terms which would enable them to

[1] Cf. Ch. VI, p. 204.

settle down ultimately as peaceful subjects with their wives and families. I know the importance of keeping the loyalists entirely with us, and nothing must be said or done which would show greater consideration for rebels or enemies than we give to our friends. But, subject to this, we have to keep in mind the fact that the Dutch must in the long run live side by side with the English, and that the best settlement would be one which left them fairly satisfied with their condition. I have only one thing to add. When Parliament meets again about February 14, I should like to have, if you could possibly find time for this—and this is an important condition—something like a general review of the situation from you, which I could present if the circumstances are favourable. At present almost all our communications are by telegram or private letter, and I have nothing which I could print which shows the general line of policy which you are pursuing. I think that such a document,[1] if you can prepare it, would do much to encourage our friends, and convince them that there is no vacillation in our actions and that you and I are alike proceeding on settled lines with definite ulterior objects which we believe can only be secured in this way.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

17/1/01. . . . Your letter of December 22nd has greatly encouraged me, as the only thing I ever really fear is a "wobble" in British opinion. Seen from afar, there have seemed to be symptoms pointing in that direction lately. But you know the signs of the times better than any man, and your assurance to the contrary is very comforting. There are one or two points it seems important to make on the subjects dealt with in your letter. (i) As regards the constitution of the Colony, I have long since accepted it from you that the straightforward course of suspending it for some years is an impossibility. And I can quite see the difficulty of meeting evils half way, which one always continues to hope may be avoided. But I have always been of opinion and still remain so, that we shall sooner or later find ourselves face to face with the choice, not necessarily of suspending the constitution *en bloc*, but of breaking it in some vital particular, if we are not prepared to hand over the Government of the Colony at a critical time to the enemies of the British connection. When that choice has to be made, I can only trust that facts will be too strong for theories. The kind of form, in which the difficulty which we have so long succeeded—not without much material injury—in evading, is likely ultimately to confront us, is gradually becoming apparent. The

[1] See Ch. VI, p. 193. Cd. 547, No. 6.

present Ministry, as you are aware, maintains itself by the votes of a few Afrikanders not so extreme as their fellows. In order to keep that support, they had during the last session, to give away their own cause on almost all minor issues, standing to arms only on the Treason Bill. By a similar sacrifice of Imperial interests they might have prolonged their existence in the future. But the present crisis has extinguished any hope of that. . . .

The Ministry in doing what they can, to save the country, are sealing their own doom, if left to the tender mercies of the present Parliament. Neither will they be able to appeal against it to the electors, for here, as invariably in this extraordinary country, the dice are loaded in favour of our enemies. The new registration must, by law, begin at the end of February, and persons not then resident in the several constituencies will not be entitled to be put on the register. *None of the Colonists now fighting for the Queen will be then resident, all the rebels who have been allowed to go to their homes will.* The former will lose their votes, the latter will keep theirs, at any rate until the Commissions (which have been suspended owing to the state of the country and which must work slowly, when resumed, as the Bond will fight every case they can) have had time to convict them. In any case the number of men struck off the register for treason is likely to be less than that of those who will lose their votes owing to their absence in the field. Of course in any country fit for British Constitutional Government, Parliament itself would provide for such an unforeseen emergency by special legislation, allowing a supplementary registration or otherwise saving the rights of men absent on duty. This Parliament will assuredly do nothing of the kind, and unless the Imperial Parliament can help, a most ridiculous injustice will be perpetrated on our friends. This is the kind of *impasse* I foresee. If it does not come in this particular form, it will come in some other. It is impracticable to hope to run this Colony as a British Colony under present circumstances, I do not say without formally abrogating the constitution, but without virtually infringing it somewhere or other. And as I have said, I still retain my belief that, when it comes to the push, facts will prove too strong for theories. If the effect of the intervention of the Imperial Parliament on the other Colonies is the thing feared, why not ask them, before resorting to it? If the case was plainly put before them, I should have little fear as to the answer.

Military Operations. What you describe as your "amateur views" of the course to follow are precisely mine. And I am by now sufficiently profane to doubt the existence of some occult military science, putting to shame the amateur view of common-sense. My experience is that on questions of what I may call

military policy (I am not, of course, speaking of purely technical matters, such as armament or tactics) the civilians in South Africa have generally been more in the right than the soldiers. I do not know what Lord Kitchener's plans are. He keeps them, quite rightly, entirely to himself, and he is unquestionably a man of great ability, unconventional mind, and strong will. His scheme for terminating the war, as far as I can guess it, is not my scheme. But it may be a much better one. Moreover there are probably more ways than one of ending the war, and it is better to have even a rather inferior plan and carry it out consistently, than to jump about from one plan to the other, as we have been doing recently. Therefore I am content to await with patience the working out of the problem by a single powerful mind, and not to worry its owner in his gigantic task any more than I am absolutely obliged to. Of course it cuts me to the heart to see places abandoned that we have held for months, like Jagersfontein and Smithfield, and the small nucleus of persons who have accepted our rule obliged to take refuge with much loss and suffering in refugee camps. As far as the bulk of the country is concerned we are further off than ever from protected areas. On the other hand, there is a beginning, whether deliberate or not, of the much longed for "return to the Rand." Letting up 1,500 of the old mining population as "mine guards" is certainly a step in the right direction, and my hope is that it will lead the military authorities gradually to go further on the same road, and that when they find, as they will, that the place is safer and their own task not increased but lightened, in consequence, more and more will be allowed to go, and that then some day, seeing so many people on the spot and finding that after all it is possible to feed them, the military may say "why not allow them to do a little work at odd times?" And then we may, after all, begin slowly to resume business, almost without intending it. But I think the surest way to prevent this desirable solution would be to openly propound it now. There, I only whisper these audacious views in strict confidence to your ear.

Terms to the enemy. I quite agree that everything should be done to make known to those still resisting us the liberality of our intentions. The telegraph will have shown you that a good deal is being done and more contemplated in this direction. I can only say that I fully understand your wishes in the matter, and will use my best efforts to carry them out. . . .

In the midst of all these preoccupations, plans for the administration of the new Colonies were matured. In this, as in other directions, Sir Alfred was greatly helped by his new legal adviser, Sir Harry Wilson, whose experience proved as valuable as his

charming and humorous temperament was soothing to one always highly sensitive to environment. The *Diary* (Nov. 27) mentions overhauling a long despatch on the constitution of the new Colonies "written by Wilson."

The attacks which were now being made upon Sir Alfred in England in Parliament and the Press prompted Chamberlain to emphasize the complete confidence of the Government in the High Commissioner by recommending him for distinction among the New Year's Honours. When approached on the subject a short time before, Sir Alfred had made it plain that he did not desire a peerage, but, if anything, would prefer the G.C.B. (Milner Papers, XLVII, ii, 103).

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

27/12/00. . . . I see the English papers this week are more than usually full of abuse of your humble servant. Of course, the Government papers back me royally. What is funny is the number of decent Liberals who seem to be still taken in by the more than transparent lies of the Dutch. My anxiety on the point is confined entirely to a *slight* nervousness, lest persistent misrepresentations may affect policy. As regards myself . . . I was always fairly indifferent to the superficialities of life, such as place, praise and honours. *Now* the comparative indifference has become superlative —indeed absolute. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to a Correspondent.

4/11/00. . . . I said positively that I *did not want* to be made a peer, that was the point of the enquiry. . . . My feeling is that for a man not rich, or well connected, and by nature a Bohemian, a title would be an encumbrance. . . . I don't aspire to anything except to bring this job to a clean finish. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir A. Milner.

27/12/00. . . . The Queen has approved, on the recommendation of Lord Salisbury, of your promotion to the Grand Cross of the Bath, and it is a great pleasure to me to congratulate you on this additional distinction. I hope that you will recognize in it the appreciation of H.M. Government of the ability and devotion that you have shown during the last few trying years, and of the high estimate which they place on the value of your services to South Africa and the Empire.

Letters of congratulation poured in from many eminent persons. What affected him more was the loss of the friend and Military

Secretary, who had been with him since he first sailed for South Africa. For Major Hanbury Williams was at this time appointed Secretary to the Secretary of State for War. His place as Military Secretary was filled by Colonel the Hon. William Lambton (1900–1904).

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Major Hanbury Williams.

. . . I went up the hill to see s.s. *Norman* sail. She went right out to sea, never halting or looking round. I felt very sad as I wished you in my heart "God-speed."

Extract from Letter. Sir Clinton Dawkins to Sir A. Milner.

21/12/00. . . . Nothing abates the determination in the proper quarters to see you through. But in the general public the cold fit is . . . beginning to succeed to the hot fit. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. (Lord) Haldane to Sir A. Milner.

22/12/00. . . . It may be of interest to you to hear the result of the short session from someone, who, while doubtful how far the Government has energetically supported it, supports your own policy in South African affairs. . . . The result of the Election has been, I think, to deepen the sense of the gravity of the situation in the House of Commons. You must not judge the Opposition by the speeches of Harcourt and Bryce. They do not represent the bulk, or anything like the bulk of Opposition opinion. That bulk was represented by the refusal to divide on the amendment moved (most mild in character) after hearing Chamberlain's speech. A minority would have divided, and would, if they dared, have moved for your recall. But they turned out to be a very small minority indeed. Grey may be taken as an exponent of the views of the majority of Liberals about South Africa, and representing as he does the opinion of Rosebery, this means that we have won in the Election. On the Government side there is unrest. . . . But of a change there is no chance. There is so far no alternative Government, ready or, for the time being, practically possible. What I most fear is, that it seems to me that above all things you need money, and lots of it, to establish good government in the two late Republics. Beach plus Harcourt, plus the heterogeneous malcontents may give trouble over this. Those who are prepared to trust you far must see what they can do. If, the white heat at which things are in South Africa notwithstanding, it is possible for you to make a friendly utterance to the Boers, it will lighten our task here. . . . I only wish to assure you that, if things continue as they are, you need not be afraid of an adverse majority in the

Opposition. . . . If you ask for money for the good of the two annexed territories, I believe that you will get it easily. . . . *Our* confidence [*in you*] is unabated by a hair's breadth. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Haldane to Lord Milner.

3/3/01. . . . That the country means to end the war by complete victory and will not compromise is, I think, beyond doubt. That any Liberal Government that might come in would take the same course is also quite plain. . . . What I am anxious to see, is a policy being pursued . . . in S.A., which men like Asquith and Grey would find no difficulty in carrying on in its continuity, if called on to do so. Were the war finished, and a thoroughly enlightened and generous line of reconstruction being followed, I think all would be easy with us. I know that is just what you mean to do. . . . The great thing to be aimed at is to make sure of absolute continuity of S.A. policy. You may absolutely rely on Rosebery, Asquith and Grey—the only people who count with us—to carry through what has been begun, and however far the reaction may go, I don't think the majority of the Constituencies would tolerate anything else. . . . You will be interested to know that at the National Liberal Federation meeting at Rugby last Friday a motion for your own recall was promptly squashed—even Lloyd George taking a part in doing so. These things show the innate sanity of the British public—even the Liberal section of it. . . .

CHAPTER VI

The Appeal to Arms: Last Phase—Guerilla Warfare and Abortive Peace Negotiations

Death of Queen Victoria.

HARDLY had the New Year come in, when the clash of arms was hushed for a moment by the news that Queen Victoria was dead. The stunning effect of that event, and appreciation of her great qualities and prestige are shown in the following letters.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to a Friend.

23/1/01. . . . Only one thing is in everybody's thoughts to-day, as it has been for three days past, and even the war is momentarily in the background. The enemy have now marched two commandos right through the Colony and they are hundreds of miles nearer Cape Town than they ever were before. But all that for the moment does not matter. The only thought in everybody's mind is—the Queen. . . . She kept the Empire together in the most critical half-century of its existence. And now we must all remember that Loyalty, though it may be immensely heightened by personal regard, is not an affection but a Principle. . . .

Same to Same.

29/1/01. . . . The grief here has been very real—the manifestation of it *impressive*, and I am not easily impressed. We had, too, a very striking gathering when the new King was proclaimed. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir A. Milner.

25/1/01. . . . During the last few days we have all of us thought and spoken of nothing but the death of the Queen. The impression here is profound. We can hardly appreciate the extent of the change which has come so suddenly. It is not merely that we feel the loss of one whose charm both in private and public life had touched all classes of her subjects, but there is also an

underlying feeling that Queen Victoria in a special sense symbolized and impersonated the British Empire. She was the greatest of Englishwomen—I had almost said of Englishmen—for she added the highest of manly qualities to the personal delicacy of the woman. I will tell you one anecdote of her. In the black period of our anxiety during the winter of 1899, and during the worst stage of the war, some of the Court were talking of the situation with great discouragement. She interrupted and said, " I will tell you one thing. I will have no depression in my house." Throughout she maintained the same firm conviction both in the justice of her cause and in its ultimate success. She has passed away in the full splendour of her reputation. My only regret is that she should not have lived to see the restoration of peace. . . .

After dispersing the organized Boer armies and securing the great lines of communication, Roberts with many others thought that the war was finished, except for the disarmament of the inhabitants of the new Colonies, and the rounding up of scattered irreconcilables. He underrated the determination of the Boers to fight on under conditions best suited to themselves. Appointed to succeed Wolseley as Commander-in-Chief, he handed over the command in South Africa to Kitchener. In a farewell address (Nov. 29), he paid a just and noble tribute to the army in South Africa, which had served him so well on the great marches he had planned and directed : " For months past, in fierce heat, in biting cold, and in pouring rain, you, my comrades, have marched and fought without a halt. . . . You have acted up to the highest standard of patriotism, and by your kindness and humanity towards your enemies, and your forbearance and good behaviour in the towns we have occupied, you have caused the army of Great Britain to be as highly respected, as it must be henceforth greatly feared in South Africa."

The greatness of his own achievement is best realized by remembering what the situation was when he landed at Cape Town, and how feeble and confused were the operations conducted by other hands in circumstances which were not more difficult. At his coming, the Boers stood everywhere on British territory ; they held three British garrisons closely invested, and had inflicted upon British arms a series of reverses to which there had been no parallel for a hundred years. Within one short year, he had traversed the whole of the enemy's countries, broken up their armies, occupied their capitals, put their Governments to flight, and restored the prestige of British arms.

To Kitchener was left the difficult and wearisome task of rounding up scattered bodies of mounted men, free to operate over the whole vast theatre of war and assisted by a friendly population. These men were led by bold and determined chiefs, intimately acquainted with a difficult country, many of them distinguished by remarkable genius for guerilla warfare, daring, and desperately resolved to fight on, in the hope of saving the independence of their country, now that the hope of achieving the larger ambition for which it had been risked had vanished. Botha, Smuts, Viljoen, Olivier, De la Rey, De Wet—the skill and daring of these men has passed into the history of their land and of the British Empire.

Roberts's departure was delayed until Dec. 11 by the illness of his daughter. So long as Roberts remained in South Africa, Sir Alfred was precluded from assuming the administration of the new Colonies, as both he and the Commander-in-Chief were anxious that he should do as soon as possible. For this reason, though he could not share in the belief that the " war was over," he was glad when the Field-Marshal handed over the command in South Africa to Kitchener. General Buller, to Sir Alfred's relief, for he distrusted his political bias, had already returned to England (Milner Papers, XXIII, iii, 115).

The day before he sailed, Roberts was entertained by a representative gathering to a luncheon. The occasion was remarkable both for the enthusiasm with which the gallant soldier was received, and also for an unexpected explosion of feeling when the High Commissioner's health was proposed. It was a demonstration provoked by the " carnival of abuse " which had recently been heaped upon his head by Dutch Afrikanders, from ex-Ministers downwards.

When the Mayor, Mr. T. J. O'Reilly, proposed the health of His Excellency, the entire company rose and cheered with extraordinary enthusiasm. Lord Roberts's reference to the High Commissioner on this occasion was as happy as it was generous : " I have endeavoured to appreciate some of Sir Alfred's difficulties. He has done everything possible to smooth mine. By his kindness, his tact, his forbearance, and his courage, he has immensely lightened my burden. I doubt if even those among you who see his daily work can realize how much he has done on behalf of you all, or what a deep debt of gratitude the country at large owes to him. History will show this. . . ."

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

10/12/00. . . . Bobs really has had the most magnificent ovation in Cape Town—we have all shouted ourselves hoarse over him and I am glad for his sake, he deserves all honour. But I must own that, apart from him, there is something ill-omened, and bizarre and almost repulsive in all this triumphing and congratulations—*in the middle of war*—As for the Bobs performance of to-day, it was really well done by Cape Town, while the little man's own share in it was simply perfect. I often thought of what you once said—that he would make an ideal "Royalty." How he could go *through* the *labour* of these endless functions always kindly, always dignified and always simple, entirely beats my comprehension. . . . At the luncheon, where by the way he said very nice things in a very nice way about me, there was, of course, a tremendous reception given to him. But there was an even more remarkable, because wholly unexpected and unforeseen, demonstration over your humble servant. I have seldom seen any audience, and never a Cape Town audience, so "drawn out of its boots." Of course it was all Cronwright Schreiner and my other vituperators, who have become finally nauseating to any palate. The *South African News* has a fresh fit every other day, and is now almost inarticulate in its fulminations. Now this has become rather more than flesh and blood can stand, so, when my health was proposed this morning, there followed a scene which even a "man of no illusions" could not consider altogether hollow and commonplace, and which I was amused to see altogether bewildered Lord Bobs' staff, who, of course, knew nothing of the local reasons for it. I spoke very briefly, and for me (which is not saying much) fairly well. But they all roared applause as if I had been Demosthenes. . . . I thought of A. J. B.'s "I have been abused into a reputation much greater than I deserve."

When Kitchener succeeded to the supreme command, the situation was reviewed by the Cabinet at home, in the hope of economies in men and money. Within the last twelve months, the strength of the army had been doubled. Expenditure was two and a half millions a month, adding to the total of £80,000,000 already spent. The era of major operations was at an end; the number of Boers in the field was being steadily diminished. Could not the Army in South Africa be reduced? But neither Kitchener nor Milner had any illusions as to the magnitude of the task which yet remained. Reduction of the forces was not to be thought of. Roberts on his return emphasized the necessity of sending troops

and yet more troops. A new force of Yeomanry was raised, and a steady stream of reinforcements, strengthened by Colonial levies, brought up the total of men under arms in June, 1901, to 164,000. But of these no fewer than 100,000 were engaged on the lines of communication, and in the depots. For the new war had entered upon the last and wearisome phase which keen observers had foretold. It was a kind of warfare singularly distasteful to the professional soldier, and called for exceptional measures and new devices. Kitchener, who had been engaged in war continually for four years, and had his eye upon India and the future, was naturally anxious to bring the business to an end. But he was a man of genius, of tremendous energy in action, and resource in devising new ways to meet new emergencies. At first he confessed himself puzzled and at a loss (*v.* p. 166). Sir Alfred was anxious lest, in his anxiety to make some sort of finish, Kitchener should be tempted to induce surrender by making promises which it would afterwards be embarrassing to fulfil. Broken promises were part and parcel of the Kruger regime ; they were not the kind of foundation on which Milner hoped to see the new British Empire built.

Kitchener did not adopt the plan of operations which Sir Alfred had outlined at Bloemfontein (Ch. IV, p. 163). Gradually he evolved other methods for dealing with an unprecedented situation. They were based on two devices, blockhouses and drives. The blockhouses were small forts, the intervals between which were secured by barbed wire and trenches. They were extended at first along the railways and afterwards along the roads and open country, which was thus divided into small enclosed areas. Through these areas systematic drives of mobile forces swept up the roving commandos, and where the inhabitants proved hostile, destroyed their crops and buildings and in some cases deported the recalcitrant population. De Wet made his last incursion into the Cape Colony in February. Hunted hard for several weeks, he barely made his escape. His mantle then fell upon the worthy shoulders of Smuts, who after riding through the Orange River Colony, penetrated to within 100 miles of Cape Town itself. Constantly hunted, but never caught by British columns, with extraordinary cunning and determination he maintained himself in the heart of the Colony till the end of the war.

Drives in the spring and summer of 1901 led to the capture of all the Free State Government (July) except Steyn. The reappearance of De Wet led to a drive in January, 1902, which

LORD KITCHENER.
From the lithograph by William Nicholson.
By kind permission of the artist.

ended in the capture of his whole force, except De Wet himself and Steyn.

Kitchener's new system of operations was partly dependent upon the maintenance of captured or surrendered Boers and their families in guarded camps, or the deportation of prisoners to St. Helena and the West Indies.

The brilliant and searching "general review" of the situation, which Sir Alfred sent in response to Chamberlain's request (Ch. V, p. 182), dispelled in a flash the easy optimism which had led the public to think that the struggle was over when Roberts laid down the command.

Sir Alfred premised that, though he had not the slightest doubt of the ultimate result, he foresaw that "the work will be slower, more difficult, more harassing, and more expensive than was at one time anticipated." He continued :

Extract from Despatch. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

Cape Town. 6/2/01. . . . It is no use denying that the last half-year has been one of retrogression. Seven months ago this Colony was perfectly quiet, at least as far as the Orange River. The southern half of the Orange River Colony was rapidly settling down, and even a considerable portion of the Transvaal, notably the south-western districts, seemed to have definitely accepted British authority, and to rejoice at the opportunity of a return to orderly government, and the pursuits of peace. To-day the scene is completely altered.

It would be superfluous to dwell on the increased losses to the country caused by the prolongation of the struggle, and by the form which it has recently assumed. The fact that the enemy are now broken up into a great number of small forces, raiding in every direction, and that our troops are similarly broken up in pursuit of them, makes the area of actual fighting, and consequently of destruction, much wider than it would be in the case of a conflict between equal numbers operating in large masses. Moreover, the fight is now mainly over supplies. The Boers live entirely on the country through which they pass, not only taking all the food they can lay hands upon on the farms, grain, forage, horses, cattle, etc., but looting the small village stores for clothes, boots, coffee, sugar, etc., of all which they are in great need. Our forces, on their side, are compelled to denude the country of everything movable, in order to frustrate these tactics of the enemy. No doubt a considerable amount of the stock taken by us is not wholly lost, but simply removed to the

refugee camps, which are now being established at many points along the railway lines. But even under these circumstances, the loss is great, through animals dying on the route, or failing to find sufficient grass to live upon when collected in large numbers at the camps. Indeed, the loss of crops and stock is a far more serious matter than the destruction of farm buildings, of which so much has been heard. I say this not at all as an advocate of such destruction. I am glad to think that the measure is now seldom if ever resorted to. At the same time, the destruction of even a considerable number of farms, having regard to the very rough and inexpensive character of the majority of these structures in the Orange River Colony and Transvaal, is a comparatively small item in the total damage caused by the war to the agricultural community.

To the losses incidental to the actual course of the campaign, there has recently been added destruction of a wholly wanton and malicious character. I refer to the injury done to the head-gear, stamps, and other apparatus of some of the outlying mines by Boer raiders, whose sole object was injury. For this destruction there is, of course, no possible excuse. It has no reason or justification in connection with military operations, but is pure vandalism, and outside the scope of civilized warfare. It is to be hoped that the miscreants who were guilty of these acts may turn out to be, for the most part, not burghers of the Transvaal, (except, possibly, some of the lowest class), but members of the Rand proletariat, belonging to various European nationalities, who, being intensely anti-British to begin with, have now taken to the veld, since they find that illicit liquor, gold thieving, and other similar profitable professions of the "good old times" are no longer available as means of gaining a livelihood. Be that as it may, the loss inflicted by such outrages will fall on the Boer agriculturist no less than on the British and other European industrial and commercial classes. Directly or indirectly, all South Africa, including the agricultural population, owes its prosperity to the Mines—and, of course, especially to the mines of the Transvaal. To money made in mining it is indebted for such progress, even in agriculture, as it has recently made, and the same source will have to be relied upon for the recuperation of agriculture after the ravages of war.

Fortunately the damage done to the Mines has not been large, relatively to the vast total amount of the fixed capital sunk in them. The mining area is excessively difficult to guard against purely predatory attacks having no military purpose, because it is, so to speak, "all length and no breadth"—one thin long line stretching across the country from east to west for many miles.

Still, garrisoned as Johannesburg now is, it is only possible successfully to attack a few points in it. Of the raids hitherto made, and they have been fairly numerous, only one has resulted in any serious damage. In that instance the injury done to the single mine attacked amounted to £200,000, and it is estimated that the mine is put out of working for two years. This mine is only one out of a hundred, and is not by any means one of the most important. These facts may afford some indication of the ruin which might have been inflicted, not only on the Transvaal and all South Africa, but on many European interests, if that general destruction of mine works which was contemplated just before our occupation of Johannesburg had been carried out.[1] However serious in some respects may have been the military consequences of our rapid advance to Johannesburg, South Africa owes more than is commonly recognized to that brilliant dash forward, by which the vast mining apparatus, the foundation of all her wealth, was saved from the ruin threatening it.

The events of the last six or seven months will involve a greater amount of repair and a longer period of recuperation, especially for agriculture, than anybody could have anticipated when the war commenced. Yet, for all that, having regard to the fact that both the Rand and Kimberley are virtually undamaged, and that the main engines of prosperity, when once set going again, will not take very long to get into working order, the economic consequences of the war, though grave, do not appear by any means appalling. The country population will need a good deal of help, first to preserve it from starvation, and then, probably, to supply it with a certain amount of capital to make a fresh start. And the great industry of the country will need some little time before it is able to render any assistance. But, in a young country with great recuperative powers, it will not take many years before the economic ravages of the war are effaced. What is more serious to my mind than the mere material destruction of the last six months is the moral effect of the recrudescence of the war. I am thinking especially of the Orange River Colony, and of that portion of the Transvaal which fell so easily into our hands after the relief of Mafeking, that is to say, the country lying between Johannesburg and Pretoria, and the border of Bechuanaland. Throughout this large area the feeling in the middle of last year was undoubtedly pacific. The inhabitants were sick of the war. They were greatly astonished, after all that had been dinned into them, by the fair and generous treatment they received on our first occupation, and it would have taken very little to make

[1] *v.* Ch. IV, p. 141.

them acquiesce readily in the new regime. At that time, too, the feeling in the Colony was better than I have ever known it. The rebellious element had blown off steam in an abortive insurrection, and was glad to settle down again. If it had been possible for us to screen those portions of the conquered territory, which were fast returning to peaceful pursuits, from the incursions of the enemy still in the field, a great deal of what is now most deplorable in the condition of South Africa would never have been experienced. The vast extent of the country, the necessity of concentrating our forces for the long advance, first to Pretoria, and then to Komati Poort, resulted in the country already occupied being left open to raids, constantly growing in audacity, and fed by small successes, on the part of a few bold and skilful guerilla leaders who had nailed their colours to the mast.

The reappearance of these disturbers of the peace, first in the south-east of the Orange River Colony, then in the south-west of the Transvaal, and finally in every portion of the conquered territory, placed those of the inhabitants who wanted to settle down in a position of great difficulty. Instead of being made prisoners of war, they had been allowed to remain on their farms on taking the oath of neutrality, and many of them were really anxious to keep it. But they had not the strength of mind, nor, from want of education, a sufficient appreciation of the sacredness of the obligation which they had undertaken, to resist the pressure of their old companions in arms, when these reappeared among them appealing to their patriotism and to their fears. In a few weeks or months the very men whom we had spared and treated with exceptional leniency were up in arms again, justifying their breach of faith in many cases by the extraordinary argument that we had not preserved them from the temptation to commit it. The general rising at the back of our advanced forces naturally led to the return of a number of our troops, and to a straggling conflict not yet concluded, in which the conduct of our own troops, naturally enough, was not characterized by the same leniency to the enemy which marked our original conquest. We did not, indeed, treat the men who had broken parole with the same severity with which, I believe, any other nation would have treated them.

Entitled, as we were, by the universally recognized rules of war, to shoot the men who, having once been prisoners in our hands, and having been released on a distinct pledge to abstain from further part in the war, had once more taken up arms against us, we never in a single instance availed ourselves of that right. But as our columns swept through the revolted country, meeting on every hand with hostility, and even with treachery, on the part of the people whom we had spared, no doubt in

some cases the innocent suffered with the guilty. Men who had actually kept faith with us were, in some instances, made prisoners of war, or saw their property destroyed, simply because it was impossible to distinguish between them and the greater number who had broken faith. This, no doubt, resulted in further accessions to the ranks of the enemy. And this tendency was augmented by the evacuation, necessary, for military reasons, of a number of places such as Fauresmith, Jagersfontein, and Smithfield, which we had held for months, and in which we had actually established a reasonably satisfactory Civil Administration. Latterly, something has been done to check the general demoralization, and to afford places of refuge for those willing to submit, by establishing camps, along the railway lines, to which burghers may take themselves, their families, and their stock, for protection. No doubt this is a very inadequate substitute for the effectual defence of whole districts. Consequently the camps are mostly tenanted by women and children whose male relatives are, in many cases, in the field against us. But, as far as it goes, it is a good measure, and there can be no doubt that, whenever we succeed in striking a decisive blow at any of the numerous commandos roaming about the country, a good many of their less willing members will find their way to one or other of these camps, in order to avoid further fighting.

As the guerilla warfare swept back over the whole of the western Transvaal, and practically the whole of the Orange River Colony, its effect upon the Cape Colony also became very marked. There was a time, about the middle of last year, when the bulk of the Dutch population in the Cape Colony, even those who had been most bitter against us at the outset, seemed disposed to accept the *fait accompli*, and were prepared to acquiesce in the union of all South Africa under the British flag. Some of them even began to see certain advantages in such a consummation. The irreconcilable line taken in the Cape Parliament, during its recent Session from July to October, was a desperate effort to counteract this tendency. But I doubt whether it would have succeeded to the moderate extent to which it has, had it not been for the recrudescence of the war on the borders of the Colony, and the embittered character which it assumed. Every act of harshness, however necessary, on the part of our troops, was exaggerated, and made the most of, though what principally inflamed the minds of the people were alleged instances of needless cruelty which never occurred. Never in my life have I read of, much less experienced, such a carnival of mendacity as that which accompanied the pro-Boer agitation in this Colony at the end of last year. And these libels still continue to make themselves felt.

It is true that excitement has subsided somewhat during the last two months, partly because some of the worst inventions about the conduct of the British troops have been exposed and utterly discredited, and partly because the general introduction of Martial Law has tended greatly to check seditious writing and speaking. But, even now, the general feeling in most of the country districts is very bad, and the commandos, which invaded the Colony in December and have been roaming about ever since, while they have not gained many adherents among the Colonial farmers, have, nevertheless, enjoyed the very substantial aid which the sympathy of the majority of the inhabitants was able to give them, in supporting themselves, obtaining fresh supplies of food and horses, and evading the forces sent in pursuit of them. The present position of affairs, alike in the new territories and in a large portion of the Cape Colony, if by no means the most critical, is possibly the most puzzling that we have had to confront since the beginning of the war. Naturally enough the public are impatient, and those who are responsible for the government of the country are bombarded with most conflicting advice. On the one hand, there is the outcry for greater severity and for a stricter administration of Martial Law. On the other hand, there is the expression of fear that strict measures would only exasperate the people. Personally, I am of the opinion, which I have always held, that reasonable strictness is the proper attitude in the presence of a grave national danger, and that exceptional regulations for a time of invasion, the necessity of which every man of sense can understand, if clearly explained and adhered to, are not only not incompatible with, but actually conducive to, the avoidance of injustice and cruelty.

I am satisfied by experience that the majority of those Dutch inhabitants of the Colony who sympathize with the Republics, however little they may be able to resist giving active expression to that sympathy, when the enemy actually appear amongst them, do not desire to see their own districts invaded, or to find themselves personally placed in the awkward dilemma of choosing between high treason and an unfriendly attitude to the men of their own race from beyond the border. There are extremists who would like to see the whole of the Cape Colony overrun. But the bulk of the farmers, especially the substantial ones, are not of this mind. They submit readily enough even to stringent regulations, having for their object the prevention of the spread of invasion. And not a few of them are, perhaps, secretly glad that the prohibition of seditious speaking and writing, of political meetings, and of the free movement of political firebrands through the country, enables them to keep quiet, without

actually themselves taking a strong line against the propaganda, and, to do them justice, they behave reasonably well under the Pass and other regulations necessary for that purpose, as long as care is taken not to make these regulations irksome to them in the conduct of their business, or in their daily lives.

That there has been an invasion at all, is no doubt due to the weakness of some of the Dutch colonists in tolerating, or supporting the violent propaganda, which could not but lead the enemy to believe that they had only to come into the Colony in order to meet with general active support. But this was a miscalculation on the part of the enemy, though a very pardonable one. They knew the vehemence of the agitation in their favour, as shown by the speeches in Parliament, the series of public meetings culminating in the Worcester Congress, the writings of the Dutch Press, the very general wearing of the Republican colours, the singing of the Volkslied, and so forth, and they regarded these demonstrations as meaning more than they actually did. Three things were forgotten. Firstly, that a great proportion of the Afrikanders in the Colony who really meant business had slipped away and joined the Republican ranks long ago. Secondly, that the abortive rebellion of a year ago had left the people of the border districts disinclined to repeat the experiment of a revolt. Thirdly, that, owing to the precautionary measures of the Government, the amount of arms and ammunition in the hands of the country population throughout the greater part of the Colony is not now anything like as large as it usually is, and far smaller than it was a year ago.

Given these conditions, it is evidently of the greatest importance to screen the largest possible amount of country from raids. But in an area considerably larger than France and the United Kingdom put together, with an immense length of frontier that can be crossed anywhere, and with exceedingly primitive means of communication, the exclusion of mobile guerilla bands from across the border is something like an impossibility. It is only by giving each district the means of local defence that the game of the invaders can be frustrated. And in some districts where the population is extremely scattered and the loyalists very few, it is impossible to raise a local defence force. These regions are, fortunately, the least important in the Colony. In the other districts, the response on the part of the British population to the general call to arms, recently made by the Ministry, has been better than the most sanguine expected.

It was always admitted, by their friends and foes alike, that the bulk of the Afrikander population would never take up arms on the side of the British Government in this quarrel, even for local defence. The appeal was therefore virtually directed to the

British population, mostly townspeople, and to a small, but no doubt very strong and courageous, minority of the Afrikanders, who have always been loyalists. These classes had been already immensely drawn upon by the Cape Police, the regular Volunteer Corps, and the numerous Irregular Mounted Corps, which had been called into existence because of the war. There must have been 12,000 Cape Colonists under arms before the recent appeal, and, as things are now going, we shall get as many more under that appeal—a truly remarkable achievement under a purely voluntary system.

The fact that, if the war continues for a few months longer, so large a number of the South African British will be under arms (for it must be remembered, in addition to the Cape Colonists, we have about 1,000 Rhodesians, and, I should say, at least 10,000 Uitlanders), is one that cannot be left out of account in considering either the present imbroglio, or the settlement after peace is restored. It is indeed calculated to exercise a most important, and, I believe, beneficial influence upon the South African politics of the future. Among the principal causes of the trouble of the past and present was the contempt felt by the Afrikander countryman, used to riding and shooting, and generally in possession of a good rifle and plenty of cartridges, for other white men less habituated to arms than he was himself. That feeling can hardly survive the experience of the past twelve months, and especially of the last six weeks. The splendid fighting of the despised Johannesburgers of the Imperial Light Horse, and of the other South African Colonial Corps, has become a matter of history, and the present *levée en masse* of the British people, including the townsmen, of this Colony, is proof positive that, when the necessity is really felt, they are equal to the best in courage and public spirit. In this respect the events of the past few months, unfortunate as they have been in many ways, have undoubtedly their brighter side. The mutual respect of the two principal white races is the first condition of a healthy political life in the South Africa of the future. It is possible that, if the extreme strain of the most recent developments of the war had never been felt throughout Cape Colony, the British inhabitants would never have had the opportunity of showing that they were inferior to none in their willingness to bear all the burdens of citizenship, including that of personal service. But the important part now played, even from the purely military point of view, by the South African Loyalists, ought, as it seems to me, to have a good effect not only in South Africa, but in England.

The inherent vice, if I may say so, of almost all public discussion of our South African difficulties is the tendency to con-

centrate attention too exclusively upon the Boers. Say what we will, the controversy always seems to lapse into the old ruts—it is the British Government on the one hand, and the Boers on the other. The question how a particular policy will affect, not merely our enemies, but our now equally numerous friends, seems seldom to be adequately considered. And yet it would seem that justice and policy alike should lead us to be as eager to consider the feelings and interests, and to retain the loyalty, of those who are fighting on our side, as to disarm the present enmity and win the future confidence of those who are fighting against us. And this principle would seem all the easier to adhere to because there is really nothing which the great body of the South African Loyalists desire, which it is not for the honour and advantage of the Mother Country to insist upon.

Of vindictiveness, or desire to oppress the Afrikanders, there is, except in hasty utterances, inevitable in the heat of the conflict, which have no permanent significance, or in tirades which are wholly devoid of influence, no sign whatever. The attitude of almost all leading and representative men, and the general trend of public feeling among the loyalists, even in the intensity of the struggle, is dead against anything like racial exclusiveness or domination. If this were not so, it would be impossible for a section of pure-bred Afrikanders, small no doubt in numbers but weighty in character and position, to take the strong line which they do in opposition to the views of the majority of their own people, based as these are, and as they know them to be, upon a misconception of our policy and intentions. These men are among the most devoted adherents to the Imperial cause, and would regard with more disfavour than anyone, the failure of the British nation to carry out its avowed policy in the most complete manner. They are absolutely convinced that the unquestioned establishment of British supremacy, and the creation of one political system from Cape Town to the Zambesi, is, after all that has happened, the only salvation for men of their own race, as well as for others. Of the terms already offered, a great majority, I believe, of the South Africans at present in arms on our side entirely approve. There is, no doubt, an extreme section who would advocate a sterner attitude on our part, but they are not numerous, and their feelings are not lasting.

The terms offered by Lord Kitchener,[1] which are, in substance, identical with repeated declarations of policy on the part of His Majesty's Government, are generally regarded as a generous and statesmanlike offer, as one which, if firmly adhered to, will ulti-

[1] *v.* p. 204.

mately be accepted, but as an offer which we cannot afford to enlarge. On the other hand, there is a very general desire that no effort should be spared to make the generous character of our intentions widely known, and to encourage any disposition on the part of the enemy to parley, with the object of making them better acquainted with the terms on which we are prepared to accept their submission.

If I might sum up the predominant, indeed the almost unanimous feeling of those South Africans who sympathize with the Imperial Government, I should describe it as follows : They are sick to death of the war, which has brought ruin to many of them, and imposed considerable sacrifices on almost all. But they would rather see the war continue for an indefinite time, than run the risk of any compromise which would leave even the remotest chance of the recurrence of so terrible a scourge in the future. They are prepared to fight and suffer on, in order to make South Africa, indisputably and for ever, one country under one flag, with one system of government, and that system the British, which they believe to ensure the highest possible degree of justice and freedom to men of all races. But, with that object accomplished, they are willing, and indeed, ready, to bury racial animosities. They have fought against the principle of race oligarchy in one form, and they do not wish to re-establish it in another. For the attainment of that object, they would rely, for the present, on the vigorous prosecution of the war, in which they are prepared themselves to take the most active part, coupled with every inducement to the enemy to come in on the terms already offered, and, for the future, as soon as public security is assured and the circumstances permit, on the extension to the newly acquired territories of a system of Colonial self-government. For my own part, I have no doubt that this attitude is a wise one, and that it only requires persistence in it, in spite of the discouraging circumstances of the moment, to lead us to ultimate success.

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir A. Milner.

7/2/01. [SECRET]. . . . I continue firmly of the opinion that there is no fear of any " wobble " on the part of the British public, provided that our policy is firm, clear, and consistent, and that in carrying it out we do not raise new questions of a deeply controversial character. In this description I should include a proposal to abrogate the constitution of a self-governing Colony, or to legislate in the Imperial Parliament over their heads. You must bear in mind that nothing at the present time can exceed the bitterness of the Opposition. In one sense they are contemptible,

because they have no trusted leader, no cohesion, and no common policy. But they are as cross as a bear with a sore head at their own impotency, at the defeat which they recently sustained at the elections, and at the failure of their attacks upon the Government. It would be much better for us if they *were* all agreed—even upon an extreme policy! We should then know how to meet them. As it is, we have to expect assault from every section, and the only matter in which we can reckon on the unanimity of the Opposition is a personal attack upon the Colonial Secretary. They would give anything to get a new point of offence, and they would certainly find this in any constitutional question raised in regard to a self-governing Colony. They would say "we have always told you that your task was impossible. You have created a new Ireland in South Africa, and we look forward to generations of coercion as the only means of administering it. You have not only done this, but you have destroyed the loyalty of a self-governing Colony and created suspicion throughout the Empire," and much more to the same effect. I know that all this is nonsense and can be answered; but the discussion would raise new issues, would unite the Opposition, would bring waverers to their support, and might therefore have an evil influence on the continuity of our policy. It is on this account that I have continually impressed upon you that only in the last resort, and if the Empire is in danger, could I be brought favourably to consider Imperial legislation for the purpose of overriding the Colonial Parliament. . . As regards the Military situation I admit to have been more depressed the last week or two than ever before. The way in which De Wet and the various commandos escape our men, do mischief all over the place, and prevent any approach towards a permanent administration, is most discouraging.

No one here dares any longer to fix a limit to the war and its expenditure, which is going on at the rate of at least a million a week. The country is denuded of troops—fortunately we can count upon the Navy, for if an invasion were possible, I do not see how humanly speaking we could resist it. Nevertheless, in view of the staleness of the troops, and the necessities of the war, a new effort has been resolved upon, and 30,000 more mounted men are to be sent to the seat of war. But if some progress is not made before long, I think public dissatisfaction may become serious and threaten the existence of the Government in spite of its enormous majority. I do not believe that our opponents would be able seriously to alter the policy, although they would no doubt change the persons; but, even then, a defeat at the present time would encourage the Boers, and increase the chances, now almost infinitesimal, of foreign intervention. . . .

When Kitchener succeeded to the command, Chamberlain suggested that a Proclamation should be issued announcing the generous terms upon which H.M. Government proposed to receive the Boers into the Empire. Sir Alfred, however, thought that the moment was inopportune, and that such a proclamation would then be interpreted as a sign of weakness and of the reaction in British public opinion, which had always been hoped for. Such, indeed, was the interpretation which the Bond leaders had already set upon Chamberlain's speech in the House of Commons, which contained the principal points in the proposed Proclamation. Roberts and Kitchener were of the same opinion (Cd. 547, pp. 5-11). The time for announcing terms would be when the Boers were anxious for peace. At present their war spirit was high ; De Wet was about to invade the Cape Colony ; and though Kitchener let it be known that he was ready to meet Botha on the understanding that the question of independence could not be discussed, both he and Schalk Burger announced that they would fight for their independence to the bitter end, and would not discuss peace (Jan. 28–31, 1901, Cd. 547 ; Kitchener to Roberts, 28/12/00). Another method was tried. Six months before, the High Commissioner had forwarded to Lord Roberts (24/6/00) a suggestion from Chamberlain, that Dutchmen of education who knew the country, might be usefully employed as emissaries to go among the Boers in the remote parts, such as Lydenburg, and induce them to surrender. The Rev. Adrian Hofmeyr was suggested.

Extract from Letter. Lord Roberts to Sir A. Milner.

4/7/00. . . . I shall be very glad to make use of the Revd. Adrian Hofmeyr. . . . He might possibly do good by dissipating the lies spread abroad amongst the Boers about our character and intentions. No better proof can, I think, be given of the educated Boers' disbelief in such lies than their leaving their wives and families to our protection. . . .

Sir Alfred now welcomed Kitchener's plan for making the British terms known to the burghers in the field through the agency of those who had surrendered. It was hoped that they would be able to persuade them " of the hopelessness of their resistance and to remove the misapprehensions of our intentions ", which were sedulously fostered by their leaders (Jan. 12, 1901, Cd. 547). Many of those who had taken up arms a second time were fighting under compulsion, and were afraid of the penalties for having

broken their oaths of neutrality. A Burgher Peace Committee was therefore formed at Pretoria. Kitchener announced to this Committee that all surrendered Boers, except those who had voluntarily broken their oaths, would, with their wives and families and stock, receive protection within laagers in their own districts. The same protection would be extended to deserted women and children, and their husbands and sons could join them there, if they wished to live in peace (Dec. 21, 1900, Cd. 547, pp. 50, 63).

Bravely these emissaries of peace took the risk of approaching the Boers on commando. Many paid the penalty of their true patriotism. They were imprisoned, flogged and treated as traitors. Meyer de Kock, Secretary of the Peace Committee, was shot (Cd. 547, 663, pp. 7–11).

Kitchener then turned to the vigorous prosecution of the war, whilst awaiting further overtures for peace.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Haldane.

21/1/01. [VERY CONFIDENTIAL] . . . My real difficulty is that I am so overworked—to some extent with masses of stuff which but for our hideously inadequate and "unbusinesslike" system would never fall on me—that I have no time to state my case. . . . I quite feel the force of what you say about "a friendly utterance to the Boers." [1] It is very difficult to make it in any case, because of the danger of being misunderstood (for instance, Chamberlain's speech, *though I agree with it*, did harm here), and the difficulty is greatly enhanced by the persistent way in which the discussions at home, whether pro-Boer, or anti-Boer, can see nothing in South Africa but Boers. . . . That makes philo-Boer utterances from me—the only person who can, even for a moment, induce home opinion to realize the non-Boer South African ($\frac{7}{8}$ths of the whole population and about half of the whites)—more difficult and risky than, in a balanced state of public feeling at home, they ought to be. And there is another thing. Mind you—I am all for the most forbearing and generous treatment of the Boers when they are once completely beaten—if only because that is the sole means of absorbing and ultimately getting rid of them as a separate, exclusive caste. But complete victory is the first condition of successful advances. And our victory is far from complete. Of course, we have absolutely smashed up the armies of the enemy and his political organization. A more highly organized and

[1] *v.* Ch. V, p. 186.

advanced political entity would be annihilated by the loss of its capital, treasury, archives, and the whole machinery of Government. But, with their primitive social and political conditions, the Boers can go on merrily for a long time without any of these (which only seem to embarrass them), just as low types of animal organisms will long survive injuries which would kill organisms of a higher type outright. They die, too, in the long run, but it takes time. For the moment the severed pieces wriggle very vigorously—each with a sting in its tail. The roving bands, with nothing to defend and nothing to lose, are actually more harassing, though less really dangerous, than the genuine armies of Joubert and Cronje. Their numerous small successes inspirit their sympathizers, and the Afrikander caste, throughout South Africa, are still *truculent* and *hopeful*. Incredible as it may appear, there are still thousands who believe in their ultimate victory, and, cruel as it may sound, there is nothing for it but to wear them out. Of course, this does not prevent our assuring them all the time, how excellent are our intentions towards them, just as certain pedagogues, I believe, are wont to accompany a birching with expressions of their affection for the pupil undergoing it. And you will observe, that we do make many professions—and quite sincere ones, though they sound funny. But great care has to be taken to avoid the appearance of hypocrisy, or—what would be even worse at the present juncture—of failing purpose.

With regard to the difficulties of the future, I see them much as you do. The great difficulty will be to get, after the huge outlay on the war, sufficient resource for the work of reconstruction. Of course, such outlay will pay us cent. per cent., both economically and politically. But "Black Michael"[1] may not see it in that light. In spite of all which I remain *hopeful*, not very of my own prospects—for I have always held that I was bound to break my own political neck over this business, and I don't mind, if I can get the job cleanly done—but of the future of South Africa. We have got to kill absolutely, and finally bury, the impossible aspiration of one race supremacy. But, in the long run, those who believed in it, no less than those who abhorred it, will be the better for getting rid of that load. I always thought the struggle would be terrible, and am not discouraged by finding it even more protracted than I thought. But I have also always held that the moral after-effects would not be so bad as has been constantly prognosticated. I know we shall be merciful victors. But victors, out and out, and past a doubt, we have got to be. . . .

[1] Chancellor of the Exchequer.

First Peace Negotiations.

Ever since December, Kitchener had been endeavouring to foil De Wet's projected invasion of the Cape Colony. The guerilla leader was harried and headed off in the Transvaal in December. But in February he succeeded in crossing the Orange River, only to find himself under constant pressure from columns drawing a cordon round him. He managed to escape after a "fearful experience," as he described it, but with the loss of all his guns, ammunition and wagons (Feb. 28). At the same time French's operations around Ermelo had shattered Botha's dream of invading Natal, whilst Kitchener had begun to put into execution his schemes both for enveloping the enemy and clearing all supplies, transport and non-combatant families from the country upon which the Boers had lived. Botha was not beaten, but so good a soldier could read the signs of the times in the converging columns sweeping over the high veldt. The moment seemed ripe for suggestions of peace.

After his defeat at Dalmanutha in August, 1900, Botha had been ready to accept the logic of events, and had urged the abandonment of the struggle. But Steyn, the Die-hard, would not hear of it. He continued to nurse hopes of success, to be brought about by foreign intervention or the sympathy of Liberals in England, upon which the utterances of some of their leaders gave him good reason to rely (Cd. 663, pp. 5, 6). Recently, however, it had been reported that Botha was again talking of peace. Kitchener sent a verbal message to him, that he was willing to meet him, but that the independence of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony must be ruled out of discussion. Mrs. Botha,[1] who took this message, returned on February 22 with a letter dated Feb. 13, in which the Boer Commandant-General replied that he would gladly discuss terms for "bringing this bloody strife to an end." Mrs. Botha assured Kitchener that his condition was clearly understood, and a meeting was arranged to take place at Middelburg on the 28th.[2] In a message to Brodrick, Kitchener asked to be allowed "to do away with anything humiliating to the Boers in their surrender." He thought that Botha could make peace, and that De la Rey and De Wet would give in (Feb. 22).

On learning from the High Commissioner of Botha's desire to

[1] Mrs. Botha had previously approached Lord Roberts during the battle of Diamond Hill, and was described by him as "a very nice person, evidently most anxious for peace."—"Letters of Queen Victoria," Lord Roberts to the Queen, 21/6/00.

[2] Cd. 546; 528, p. 1.

treat, Chamberlain cabled that, if it was genuine, he would find H.M. Government most anxious to meet him " on all points affecting individual positions." The policy intended to be pursued as to future Government had already been made clear (Cd. 528, p. 1).

The following letter shows that Sir Alfred was, at first, left in the dark as to these negotiations. His position, indeed, in relation to the Commander-in-Chief was in this respect unique. Military and political questions were so closely interwoven in this war, in which a whole nation was still fighting after its territories had been annexed and government dispersed, that the conduct and issue of peace negotiations depended to a large extent upon the military commanders. A divergence of view between the soldier and the civil authority was almost inevitable. The General, aware that from a military point of view the war was won, but that it would involve infinite trouble and expense to reduce the guerilla bands, saw no objection to negotiating a surrender on terms.[1] He thought, too, that, having regard to the future harmony of the two races under the Empire, it would be no bad thing to humour the pride of a desperate foe. The High Commissioner, on the other hand, was equally convinced that negotiations at this juncture were premature, and that an unconditional surrender was vital, if the idea of race domination was to be uprooted once and for all. Nor would he entertain the idea of a settlement by which loyal Dutch and those who had given up the struggle might be confronted by those who had fought on with the taunt that they had won the war (Milner Papers, XLV, iii, 68). A duel, in fact, ensued between these strong men, each of iron will and trained intellect, the soldier a diplomatist of oriental *finesse*, the politician a statesman of infinite clarity of view. They fought, not as to the end to be gained, but as to the means to obtain it. They fought, but they never quarrelled. Sir Alfred had schooled himself to infinite patience.

On all occasions he was ready to argue, to reason, to expound with infinite resource and sweet reasonableness, in the hope of enlightening the ignorant and convincing the prejudiced. Yet he himself found in Kitchener his match in argument. Almost, against his own clear judgment, the subtle soldier succeeded in persuading the politician.[2] For though Kitchener was by nature in a high

[1] Kitchener to Roberts, 9/5/01 ; Milner Papers, XLV, iii.

[2] " His personal impact is great," Milner wrote during the negotiations in May, 1902. " I am not very influenceable in that sort of way, but I am conscious of his deflecting me at times a little from my course, *against* my judgment."

degree impatient for results, he was also capable of waiting and working, doggedly or by stratagem, for ends not obtainable at once. Therein lay part of his greatness, a greatness which Milner fully appreciated. It was that appreciation which enabled him, whilst often profoundly disagreeing with Kitchener as to means and methods, to continue to work with him for ends on which both were fully in accord. The knowledge of each other, and the respect for each other gained by these two great men in South Africa, proved of infinite value to their country when their abilities were once more devoted without reserve to its service during the World War. It was Milner, who, when war was declared in 1914, insisted upon Kitchener's seeing Asquith at a time when every moment was precious, and the Prime Minister seemed undecided as to what to do. The resultant interview made Kitchener War Secretary.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

16/1/01. . . . Well, of course the point of interest at the present is Kitchener's negotiation with the Boers in the North. I know practically nothing about it. My own view is, that it all depends on how exhausted the Boers are. If they are actually on their last legs, they will *pretend to have been converted by Kitchener's* blandishments, and will surrender. *Not otherwise.* . . . On the other hand the " loyal Dutch " are not joining. They are too cautious to join men on the run, who have no arms to give them, and who evidently have no chance of success. And, if the " loyal Dutch " are not joining, the real loyals, Dutch (a few) as well as English, are bucking up wonderfully. Chester has got more than 500 mounted men in a fortnight. Good that, especially as at least half of them are solid farmers of the adjoining Districts and not filibusters. But then Chester is Chester. I never in my life saw anybody work so hard. . . .

When Botha met Kitchener at Middelburg, the Boer General, in spite of the assurance which had been given by Mrs. Botha, at once asked that the Republics should be allowed to retain their independence. When Kitchener refused to discuss the point, he expressed doubt whether his followers would accept peace without it. Details of a possible settlement were then considered. Botha had come prepared with ten points for discussion, raising the questions (i) of the future government of the Colonies ; (ii) retention of rifles by Boers for their protection against natives ; (iii) use of the Dutch language ; (iv) franchise of Kaffirs ; (v) inviolability

of Dutch Church property and public trusts and orphan funds; (vii) imposition of a war tax on farmers; (viii) date of return of prisoners of war; (ix) pecuniary assistance to enable farmers to start afresh; (x) amnesty for all. In addition to (vi), Botha urged that the British Government should take over the legal debts of the Republics, including about one million pounds' worth of notes issued by them during the war. To (i) Kitchener had replied, subject to confirmation from home, that a Crown Colony administration, consisting of a nominated Executive and an advisory elected Assembly, would be followed after a period by a representative Government. (ii) Rifles might be retained under licence. (iii) English and Dutch would have equal rights. (iv) As to the treatment of Kaffirs, Botha insisted on the strong opposition of the Boers to their enfranchisement, but agreed that the question might be left to be settled when representative government had been granted. He pressed strongly for an amnesty for all *bona-fide* acts of war. The Boers, he said, would not leave the Cape and Natal rebels to be punished, though he did not object to their being disfranchised.[1]

The difficulty of granting an amnesty for rebels was that it must be granted to all or none. Otherwise, whilst those who had fought as rebels in the early stages of the war were still undergoing punishment, certainly very lenient, but still punishment, those who prolonged the war by remaining in the field would get off scot-free.

Kitchener at once cabled the gist of this conversation to Brodrick and believed that he could adjust any differences with Botha. Their meeting had taken place on the very day, February 28, on which Sir Alfred had left Cape Town to assume the administration of the new Colonies. Next day, till midnight, he noted in his *Diary*, was "the laziest day I have spent for two years." The rest was not for long. On reaching De Aar, a telegram was handed to him from Kitchener giving the substance of his conference with Botha. He suggested that they should meet (Milner Papers, XLV, ii, 37).

Sir Alfred hastened on to Bloemfontein, to be met by Kitchener at the station (March 2). Late into the night, and again from cock-crow, after sleeping in their trains, they debated the terms of the letter which was to be based on the conversation between the two Generals, and sent by Kitchener to Botha.[2] Next morning (March 3), after Sir Alfred's saloon coach had been hitched on to

[1] Cd. 528, p. 2.

[2] *Diary*: Cd. 528, pp. 2, 3.

Kitchener's train, a draft of the proposed letter was sent home for the approval of the Home Government. Sir Alfred then travelled with Kitchener to Pretoria. Their train was preceded by an armoured car, for there were rumours of Boer raids upon the line. At Pretoria Sir Alfred stayed for ten days with the Commander-in-Chief, spending his time in long conversations with him and other public officers, and preparing his place of residence at Johannesburg.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

Bloemfontein. 2/3/01. . . . I have just been dining with Goold-Adams . . . and have had two hours with K. of K. We don't see eye to eye, as might be expected. He is fearfully sick of the war, sees no possible credit in the continuance of it, and is, I think, rather disposed to go far in making things easy for the enemy. I feel that every concession we make now means more trouble hereafter. At the same time it is not easy, with people sensibly weakening at home, and with your General on the spot desperately anxious to come to terms, to insist on all that you personally consider important. I foresee that I shall be driven to compromise—a thing I loathe. But I hope to save our policy from anything discreditable, though I fear it will be impossible to save it from making some concession which will be rather weak. It is the price we have to pay for " regrettable incidents " and general military incompetence. . . .

Kitchener's letter was approved by the Home Government (March 6), with certain amendments rendering more precise some of Kitchener's vague expressions, and modifying a few important points.

Sir Alfred had noted his agreement with the proposals contained in the draft letter, with the exception of that which bound H.M. Government, in addition to granting an amnesty in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, to move the Governments of Cape Colony and Natal to do likewise by Colonial rebels, with the qualification of disfranchisement. The Home Government had no power to bind the Colonial Governments in this wise, nor could the general acceptance of disfranchisement as the sole and sufficient penalty for rebellion be regarded as politic. It would have a deplorable effect, Sir Alfred said, to obtain peace by such a concession (Cd. 528, pp. 2, 3). The High Commissioner was also opposed in principle to the proposed expenditure of a million pounds in paying *pro rata* the legal debts of the States, whether contracted during hostilities or not. On the first point, the letter was altered

in accordance with Sir Alfred's suggestion; on the second, a modification was introduced, drawing a distinction between debts contracted before and after annexation. On a third point, the granting of financial assistance to the farmers, an alteration was made to which both Sir Alfred and Kitchener objected.

In the draft letter assistance was promised to the farmers of the two Colonies. Sir Alfred, whilst opposing the recognition of State debts in any form as a matter of principle, or the concession of assistance as a right, had, as his correspondence with Chamberlain has shown, long perceived the wisdom of granting help to the Boer farmers to make a fresh start. He had at first inclined to the idea of loans to substantial farmers to enable them to restart their farms. But he had now come to the conclusion that free assistance would in many cases be both just and politic, whilst Kitchener thought that in loans the Boers might suspect a design for "getting farmers into the clutches of the Government." [1] Chamberlain, however, thought that such generous treatment might wear the appearance of treating enemies better than loyalists, and only consideration of the possibility of assistance "by loan" was promised.[2] On the position of Kaffirs, as to which Boer feeling was so sensitive, he was clear and definite. Whilst accepting the clause by which their enfranchisement was to be delayed till after the grant of representative government, the sentence given below (p. 213) was added. For "we cannot," Chamberlain wrote to Sir Alfred (6/3/01), "consent to purchase peace by leaving the coloured population in the position in which they were before the war, with not even the ordinary civil rights which the Government of the Cape Colony has long conceded to them." Sir Alfred put on record his disagreement with some of these alterations, but said that he regarded none of them as of much importance except the introduction of the words "by loan." The letter, thus modified, was despatched by Kitchener on March 7. In it, H.M. Government promised to grant, immediately after a complete cessation of hostilities and surrender of arms by the Boers, an amnesty in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies for all *bona-fide* acts of war. But rebels of Natal and Cape Colony, if they chose to return to those Colonies, would be liable to be dealt with by the laws of those Colonies specially passed to meet the circumstances of the war. The special law in the Cape Colony had, it was added, greatly mitigated the ordinary penalties for high treason. All prisoners of war, being

[1] Cd. 528, No. 8. [2] Cd. 528, pp. 3–5.

burghers or colonists, would be brought back to their country as quickly as possible. At the earliest practicable date military administration would be replaced by Crown Colony Government with a Governor and Executive Council. "But it is the desire of H.M. Government as soon as circumstances permit, to introduce a representative element, and ultimately to concede to the new Colonies the privilege of self-government. Moreover, on the cessation of hostilities a High Court will be established in each of the new Colonies to administer the law of the land, and this Court will be independent of the Executive. Church property, public trusts, and orphan funds will be respected. Both the English and Dutch languages will be used and taught in public schools where parents of the children desire it, and allowed in Courts of Law. As regards the debts of the late Republican Governments, H.M. Government cannot undertake any liability. It is, however, prepared, as an act of grace, to set aside a sum not exceeding one million pounds to repay inhabitants of the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies for goods requisitioned from them by the late Republican Governments, or subsequent to annexation, by Commandants in the field being in a position to enforce such requisitions. But such claims will have to be established to the satisfaction of a Judge or Judicial Commission appointed by the Government to investigate and assess them; and, if exceeding in the aggregate one million pounds, they will be liable to reduction *pro rata*. . . . The new Government will take into immediate consideration the possibility of assisting by loan the occupants of farms, who will take the oath of allegiance, to repair any injuries sustained by destruction of buildings or loss of stock during the war. No special war tax will be imposed upon farmers to defray the expense of the war. When burghers require the protection of fire-arms, such will be allowed to them by licence, and, on due registration, provided they take the oath of allegiance. Licences also will be issued for sporting rifles, guns, etc., but military fire-arms will only be allowed for purposes of protection. As regards the extension of the franchise to Kaffirs in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, it is not the intention of H.M. Government to give such franchise before representative government is granted to those Colonies, and if then given, it will be so limited as to secure the just predominance of the white race. The legal position of coloured persons will, however, be similar to that which they hold in the Cape Colony."

These terms would be regarded as cancelled, if not accepted

within a reasonable time. De Wet and Steyn, who had just escaped from pursuit in the Cape Colony, refused to listen to them. On March 16 Botha broke off negotiations, without offering any explanation (Cd. 528, p. 11). A fortnight later De Wet issued a contemptuous circular to the Free Staters, declaring that the great majority of the people would not accept Kitchener's proposals, even if their government did, and that it was useless to examine them, "as the only object for which we are fighting is the independence of our Republics." Nothing short of it would put an end to the conflict (Cd. 663, p. 9, April 1). Botha, having ascertained the lines upon which a settlement might ultimately be arranged, and satisfied himself that "nothing worse than this can befall us," thought it well worth while to fight on (Cd. 663, pp. 3, 10). Chamberlain (April 19) instructed the High Commissioner that neither he nor Kitchener was to reopen negotiations, nor were the Boers to be led to think that more favourable terms were to be offered. If the Boer leaders made new suggestions, Kitchener was to forward them to the Home Government, without expressing any opinion on them to those who made them (Cd. 663, p. 2).

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

8/3/01. . . . We had rather a struggle. . . . K. affirms, though I do not know how much he means of this, or how far it is just said to frighten me into agreeing to a compromise, that our soldiers can't be trusted not to surrender on the smallest provocation, and that consequently disaster is not even now impossible if the Boers stick to it. For the 50th time in this endless business I was in a position of greatest perplexity. Knowing the feeling at home, which is of increasing disgust at this business, and anxiety of Ministers about the cost of it and the difficulty of keeping the national resolution at the sticking point, I felt that I *could not afford* to have a rupture with K. on the question of the terms of peace with him appealing to the current sentiment at home against the unbending attitude of the High Commissioner. When I say "I could not afford," I don't mean that I personally could not—for my personal reputation will certainly stand higher the more unbending I remain. But I could not afford it in the public interest, for it would not be possible to compel the army to fight on against *the wishes of its own Chief and the whole popular sentiment*, and an attempt to do so, which failed, would only encourage the enemy to still further efforts and demands, and end in a terrible fiasco. So I had to bargain and by long argumentation—with an occasional "I won't have *that* on any account," I managed to arrive at

something *not good* but tolerable, on which we could agree. Fortunately, he felt the importance to him of my endorsement of his recommendations, as much as I felt the awkwardness of a split with him. And so the conditions of surrender went home by wire from Bloemfontein on Sunday morning last, and after a vigorous exchange of telegrams—in which the terms were rather improved than otherwise, and I was backed up on the only point on which K. and I had *openly* differed—they were finally despatched . . . and we now await the result. I am not sanguine. . . . I get on excellently with K. . . . I like the total absence of cant, the *clearness of vision*, and the immense strenuousness of his character. He may deceive others. I don't think he deludes himself. He *has not got* the "lie in the soul." And there is a kindly side to him too, shown in his remembrance of old friends and appreciation of good women. . . . And I am *so sorry* for a man of his grasp, energy and decision having such an instrument to work with as the British Army. Set to play on a cracked fiddle which has been in the rain for a fortnight. . . .

March 22, 1901. . . . The Botha negotiations have entirely failed. I hope we shall take warning and avoid such rotten ground in the future. . . .

As to the question of a loan:

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir A. Milner.

25/1/01. . . . I am hoping at every moment to hear that you see your way to go up to Pretoria and to make a commencement in regard to the future settlement. I am coming to the conclusion that something will have to be done to resettle the Boers upon their farms. The majority of them will find their stocks gone and perhaps in many cases their farms destroyed. They will not have the capital to start again, and yet they have got to live under our rule. There is talk among a certain class here that it would be well to sell them up, foreclosing their mortgages, and taking possession of the land, which might be relet to British settlers. This appears to me to be very wild. We cannot get rid of the Boers, and it is hard to see what they can do except on the land. Neither is there any prospect that a sufficient number of British settlers are ready to take their places. I believe, therefore, that we shall have to lend them money on favourable terms to enable them to restore their farms and to support themselves. There are many difficulties in the way, first of all being the danger of irritating the loyalists by anything which they would consider unwise and unjust leniency. We might also lay ourselves open to claims from the loyalists for compensation and for assistance which

we can hardly afford to give. Possibly something might be done in the way of a Land Bank, guaranteed by the Government or assisted by a sufficient Government loan, which would make advances to the Boers repayable in easy instalments and secured by the farms. This would be better, I think, than for the Government to become directly moneylender to a large portion of the population. But the whole matter is one on which I should like to have your observations. You will know better than I do how far the danger that I anticipate is real of finding after peace is made that a large portion of the Boer population are impecunious and therefore desperate men, and you will also know how such a social and political danger can best be met without arousing serious resentment on the part of the loyalists. If the Land Bank were to undertake the work of settlement of those loyalists and ex-soldiers who desire to remain on the land, as well as the resettlement of the old population, the loyalists might perhaps gladly accept its establishment in view of the first object. I have been told that a loan of a million would be sufficient to restore the Boers. Another million might be appropriated to loans to intending settlers. I am telegraphing to you officially as to the possibility of some sort of educational propaganda among the prisoners both in South Africa and in Ceylon and St. Helena. If they go back as ignorant as they went, and embittered by the supposed indifference to their welfare on the part of their captors, they will at once form a dangerous element. It has been suggested that many of them on grounds of self-interest would be glad to learn English, and that their teachers might gain influence with them and point out to them the opportunities that they will have under the new regime. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

20/2/01. . . . My principal object in writing to-day is to reply to your suggestion about assisting the Boers to restart when the war is over. I may say at once that I entirely agree with you in thinking that something will have to be done in that direction. And I think opposition to it among the loyalists will be greatly lessened if the re-establishment of the Boers, or so many of them as are worth helping (for I disbelieve in the wisdom of trying to prop up, as the Transvaal Government did, hopeless paupers) is combined with some important scheme for introducing British settlers. The two things appear to me to fit into one another, and their *combination in one scheme* would disarm much of the opposition which would be excited by either separately. Personally, I am much more hopeful than most people are of the possibility of

introducing a large British element into the agricultural population. The bulk will remain Dutch, but, if we can appreciably strengthen the British element, it is all we want. The strength of the British position will always lie in the industrial and commercial class, but this is not enough, while the agricultural population in large portions of the country is wholly Dutch. If, on the other hand, there were a strong British element, though a minority among the farmers, this, together with the Mining and Commercial classes, would make things safe. I notice in this Colony that, while the isolated British farmers get absorbed, the presence of a substantial British element, even as little as 1/5th, in an agricultural community otherwise Dutch, makes a great difference. Any appreciable minority holds its own, and there is much less race-feeling, where the two races are not wholly separate in interests, as well as in origin and language.

My idea is that we should aim at two things : (i) To assist those Dutch farmers, who are essentially solvent, but temporarily embarrassed, or even ruined, by the war, by loans on easy terms enabling them to restock their farms, and, where the need exists, rebuild their farmhouses, and (ii) To get hold of the land of those farmers, who were hopelessly encumbered before the war, and in whose case ruin has only been precipitated by that calamity, with a view to putting British settlers—of the farming class, not inexperienced "Tommies"—in their places by letting them have the land on the purchase by instalment principle. One agency could deal with both classes of cases. It ought to be an agency controlled by Government, but preferably not a branch of the Government. It would need financial support—on a liberal scale—but I do not think, though Government would have to back it with credit, that there need be much, if any, sacrifice of public money. I propounded these ideas to Mr. [*Sir L.*] Michell, who, as you know, is the leading man in the Banking world in South Africa, a very public-spirited and honourable man, as well as a first-rate business head. Rather to my surprise, and greatly to my gratification, he did not at all discourage me, but, on the contrary, thought that the proposal was quite a practical one. . . . Two matters I may just refer to in conclusion—rays of light in an otherwise still very overcast sky. One is the really excellent beginning which Sargant [1] is making in his educational work. He is at once enthusiastic and businesslike, quite free from pedantic ideas—educational or bureaucratic—and gets on capitally with the people. The ex-Republican Boers appear to be keen about education and want to have English. We may therefore do a good deal

[1] See Ch. VII, p. 241.

in the refugee camps. Till the Bond gang and the parsons get hold of their inmates—which the war itself renders difficult for the present—they may continue in that frame of mind which enables them to make a start. Another man who has begun exceedingly well is Goold-Adams. One has yet to see what he will make of administration on a big scale. But he has already more than justified my anticipation that his tact and knowledge of the Boer character would be of great use. While here, he saw a good deal of the leading O.R.C. Boers in the prisoners' camp, and it is evident that he made the best impression, the effects of which are still visible. On the whole, I am not unhopeful of the gradual growth of a better feeling among the prisoners. I am quite certain that, when we can let some of them back to camp in their own districts, the feeling will greatly improve. Cape Town is a bad atmosphere for them. The more I see of South Africa, the more I am convinced that it is the Bond Junta and the Hollanders who have done the mischief, and have worked up the race feeling among the ignorant majority who, left to themselves, would be manageable enough. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir A. Milner.

1/4/01. . . . I do not know whether in your busy life you ever find time to look at the attacks which are made upon you almost as continuously as upon myself. If so, I am sure you pay no more attention to them than I do, but you may like to know that in my opinion they are absolutely innocuous, and indeed strengthen our position as they arouse the indignation of our friends, and confirm their confidence in our policy and their determination to support it. I am convinced that the Government is even stronger now in regard to its South African policy than it was at the last election, and the mass of the people are still thoroughly determined to see the business through, however long it may last and whatever it may cost. . . . The terms of settlement offered by you and Kitchener to Botha, and approved by us here, are generally admitted to have gone to the utmost limits of concession. In fact there has been a good deal of private dissatisfaction expressed by our friends who think that we have gone too far. The opposition, and especially that amiable fanatic, Mr. Bryce, tried to make out the other night that there were serious differences between you and Kitchener, and between you and me, Kitchener being represented as the Angel of Mercy, you as somewhat less accommodating, and the Colonial Secretary as the Evil Genius, who, by his ill-considered interference, destroyed all hopes of a peaceful settlement. I take it that, as a matter of fact, all three

of us are substantially agreed. Kitchener could not, of course, know all the details of the political position, and the original terms of his letter were a little too vague and in some instances went a little too far. Your desire to omit the words " by loan " in connection with possible assistance to the Boers rather surprised me, because in the letter to which I am now replying you specially limit the assistance to farmers who are essentially solvent but temporarily embarrassed, and suggest loans on easy terms to restock and rebuild farms. I feel sure, therefore, that on reflection you will agree with me as to the danger of making absolute gifts of money, although in some very exceptional cases you may hereafter find it desirable to go beyond the ordinary rule. It would not do, however, to allow the Boers to think that they could escape all loss in consequence of the war, and any idea that that was our policy would be greatly resented here as well as in South Africa. Speaking generally, the terms offered seem to me to embody the policy which we have always had in view, although the proferred payment of a million in respect of debts incurred by the Transvaal was quite new to me, and went a little beyond what I myself should have suggested. My only doubt as regards the rest is whether we ought to offer such terms as conditions of peace, or part of a bargain, and whether we should not reserve them as acts of grace after an unconditional surrender. I am inclined to hope that we may have no more negotiations. We have tried the Boers more than once. They have thrown away their opportunity, and I hope we shall now be able to keep a free hand. The negotiations, however, appear to have had some effect in modifying the extreme opinions expressed on the Continent, where it is now admitted that they were more generous than could possibly have been expected from the conqueror to the vanquished ; but even here there are not wanting commentators who see in them a proof of weakness and of doubt on the part of the Government as to their ultimate success. . . .

The negotiations had failed. Though disappointment was felt in England, it was generally recognized that they had been foredoomed to failure, and that the Boers were not yet ready for the sacrifice of their independence.

Kitchener, however, believed that he could have come to an agreement with Botha, if matters had been left in his hands. He characterized Sir Alfred's attitude as very narrow and vindictive, if strictly just ; hinted that some share in the failure of negotiations was due to Boer distrust and Botha's dislike of the High Commissioner ; and informed Brodrick that the question of an amnesty

was the decisive one.[1] It may well be doubted whether he was right. He had previously expressed doubts whether the amendments relating to a loan and the enfranchisement of natives would be accepted by the Boers; and Botha was equally uncertain whether he could persuade his men to accept surrender of independence. Sir Alfred was of opinion that this was really the vital point upon which Botha broke off negotiations. When we remember De Wet's declaration of April 1 (p. 214), and the manifesto issued by Steyn and Schalk Burger in the following July (p. 221), it seems hardly probable that Botha could have induced the Transvaalers, much less the Free Staters, to stop fighting for their independence at this juncture. When peace was eventually made Chamberlain asked for information on this point.

Telegram. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

9/6/02. [SECRET AND PERSONAL] . . . I should like to know what reason Louis Botha himself gives for refusing terms at Middelburg. Was it on account of changes made here by H.M. Government, or was it solely because at that time he was not ready to abandon independence?

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

9/6/02. [SECRET AND PERSONAL] . . . I have no doubt that his reason was that he still hoped for independence. . . .

Increasing surrenders in the Transvaal, however, seemed to suggest that a growing number of burghers were beginning to think that the terms of peace should have been accepted. Many were only kept in the field by the encouragement of absurd lies told to them by their leaders, as, for instance, that Russia had declared war on their behalf (Milner Papers, XLV, iii, 68). In May the Transvaal leaders held a Council of War at Ermelo. Impressed by the growing hopelessness of the situation, they decided, without consulting the Free Staters, to approach Kitchener for permission to send a deputation to consult Kruger as to the prosecution of the war; and if this were refused, to ask for an armistice for the two Governments to consider the situation. Botha and Schalk Burger stated on this occasion that they were only waiting for Steyn and De Wet to agree to peace (Milner Papers, XLV, iii, 93).

[1] Kitchener to Brodrick, 22/3/01, 19/6/01 (Milner Papers, XLV, iii). His argument is expounded with eloquence by Sir George Arthur, "Life of Lord Kitchener," Vol. II, pp. 25 ff.

But Steyn furiously denounced their decision. A few weeks later the two Governments met (June 20) at Waterval. But successes at Vlakfontein and Wilmansrust, and a vehement exhortation cabled by Kruger to continue the war, enabled Steyn and De Wet to carry the day. It was decided to fight on.

Stimulated by Kruger, Steyn and Schalk Burger published a manifesto declaring that " no peace condition will be accepted, by which our independence and national existence, or the interests of our Colonial brothers, shall be the price paid." A letter written by Smuts to Steyn at this time stated that, if they had to give up now, it would be with the intention of fighting when England was in difficulties.

In England, in spite of these significant indications, the publication of despatches showing differences of opinion between Chamberlain, Kitchener and Sir Alfred, encouraged a section of the Opposition to bitter denunciation of a lost opportunity of peace. Morley and others declared that Sir Alfred had blundered in refusing an unconditional amnesty, and that he ought to resign in order to conciliate the Boers.

Apart from this, a certain war weariness had begun to be manifest, which was rendered more apparent by the weakness and uncertainty displayed by a Government which was rapidly losing its hold upon the constituencies. Chamberlain, Selborne and Brodrick alone showed vigour and determination. But with the divisions in the Liberal party, there was no alternative Government. But if Ministers were becoming " flabby," as Sir A. Godley put it, the country stood firm behind Milner, determined to see the thing through, convinced that he at any rate would not shift and change.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Godley[1] *to Sir A. Milner.*

27/3/01. . . . Since I heard from you three or four months ago you have been more in evidence in this country than at any previous time since you went out to S. Africa, with the natural result that you have been more attacked, both in Parliament and out of it. But you must bear in mind that these attacks have not as yet been by any means serious enough to draw the fire of your supporters and admirers, who are, in fact, 19 out of 20 of those who pretend to have an opinion on the subject. All the same, I thought it unnecessary to telegraph home the fact that one reason why Botha rejected our overtures was that he " strongly objected to " Sir A. Milner ; and still more unnecessary for the Govt.

[1] Lord Kilbracken, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for India, 1883–1909.

having received the telegram, to publish that part of it. Nothing is gained by setting you up as a cock-shy ; though it is true that the results are not likely to do you any serious harm. The fact is that, while *you* have the confidence of the people of this country, so far as they know or understand anything about the matter, it is beginning to be otherwise with H.M. Govt., who have started on their journey downhill. Needless to say that I regret this, for the reason, among others, that their weakness must weaken you. But it is true, and I have no doubt you are quite aware of it from your own communications with them, as well as from other evidence. It is the failure not of a policy, but of a Government ; the individuals who compose it seem for the most part to be getting flabby, and used-up, and they are losing popularity with their own party. Like a man who has had a fall out hunting, they seem to have lost their nerve. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir J. A. R. Marriott to Sir A. Milner.

7/3/01. . . . There is hardly a man in England who does not sincerely believe that you have done a service to the Empire comparable to that rendered by Hastings and Wellesley in India. . . .

Extract from Letter. Earl of Camperdown[1] *to Sir A. Milner.*

29/3/01. . . . I think that you may entirely leave out of account the small attacks which are occasionally made upon you. . . . It is almost universally considered that you are not only essential for S. Africa, but ought to have large discretion and powers.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Lyttelton Gell.

19/2/01. . . . I must . . . thank you for one sentence in yours of the 11th of January. It is the observation that " we are a people just rotten with sham canting sentimentality." That is precisely what we, or as I should prefer to say you, claiming for the moment a privilege of regarding myself as a Colonist, are, and you are, if I may be allowed to say so, exceptionally nauseating just now. I gather from the telegraphic report of the first debates in the House that the Radicals advocate buying peace by making further concessions to the Boers. Of course, if Radicals mean the Fenian-Morley-Bryn Roberts-Wilfred Lawson combination, this is natural. What, I am bound to say, astounds me is that I get letters from a number of quite sensible and moderate people all apparently hankering after the same thing. Don't you think we might wait till we have driven the Boer (marauders ?) out of this

[1] Lord of the Admiralty, 1870–4.

Colony before we begin making advances to them? I cannot help remembering a remark of General Joubert, who certainly was one of the finest Boers that ever lived. He said—I cannot give the exact words, but I give the sense—" The English are like baboons. It is no good arguing with them. If you want to get anything out of them, the only way is to hammer their heads with a stone till they let go." In June last, when people thought the war was over, these suggestions of compromise were not made, or, if made, were hardly audible. Now they are getting quite loud. What has made the difference? Nothing on earth, except the fact that the Boers have made themselves very troublesome to us in the interval. So strong is original sin in me—but my disposition is just the opposite to all this—the more I get hammered the less I want to give in.

I am, I say it with shame, the inventor and sole patentee of the original policy of leniency. When the Boers were first decisively beaten, I advocated the policy of making it easy for them to come in. I suggested myself the plan of allowing them to go back to their farms at once on taking the oath of neutrality, and I still don't regret it. But, from the first moment that it became perfectly evident that our leniency was abused, I advocated the adoption of a different course, and to that I adhere. I am sorry to say that I feel no admiration for what is described as the heroic resistance which the Boers have offered to us since then. It is all tainted with perfidy, and it isn't really heroic a bit. Just now, the men still fighting us—and they are, for the most part, the lower class of the people, as the more civilized and respectable section have in many instances abandoned the struggle—are degenerating into absolute savagery. Brutal treatment and murder of natives are matters of daily occurrence. We have been, and are, extraordinarily inapt and clumsy. But it is to our blundering, their cunning, and the enormous physical difficulties, not to any heroism, that the prolongation of the war is due. Nominally, [? naturally] the longer it continues, the worse they behave. Nothing more disgraceful has happened in modern war than the treatment of the coloured man Esau at Calvinia. Whether they have actually murdered him, I do not yet know.[1] What I do know is that they flogged him till he fainted, for the offence of being loyal to the British Crown, he being born and bred a British subject. The man is well known to me by correspondence, and is known to my staff personally. Though coloured, he was a most respectable, upstanding, and, for his class in life (a village blacksmith),

[1] In a later cable to Chamberlain he stated that there was absolutely no doubt that he was murdered (Cd. 464).

superior man—far more civilized than the average Boer farmer. If the lowest of the Boers had been treated in that way by British soldiers, there would have been a howl of indignation on your side, not confined to the Radicals, while the latter would have behaved like maniacs about it. As it is, the more brutally the Boers treat the natives and coloured people, and the clearer the rottenness, corruption, and virtual barbarism of the whole Boer system become, the more affectionate, and even gushing, is the attitude of ultra-Liberals in England towards people who conspicuously trample every principle of Liberalism under foot. Every crime against Liberalism and humanity is pardonable in the eyes of these gentry on one condition, which is that it should be committed by an enemy of their country. That circumstance purifies and sanctifies all. Perhaps you will think I am not in a very good humour, and growing irritable from overwork. Not at all, but I see things as they are, and, in the register of my sins, cant and sentimentality are not included. . . .

There had already been some signs of the decadence of the guerilla war into one of mere brigandage by roving bodies of banditti, which Kitchener dreaded. Cases of savage murders of natives by the Boers were becoming frequent (*v.* Kitchener's despatches, Cd. 821, 822, 888). A particularly cruel instance was the murder of Esau referred to in Sir Alfred's preceding letter (Cd. 464; 547, pp. 60–63; 903, pp. 17–35).

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

13/2/01. . . . The number of murders by the Boers is assuming startling proportions.[1] . . .

On January 7 Sir Alfred received a deputation, representing over 100,000 of H.M. coloured subjects in the Western Province. They presented an Address in which they assured him of their unalterable loyalty to the Queen, and their confidence that he would always safeguard their interests and promote the welfare of the coloured population throughout South Africa. They rejoiced at the incorporation of the two late Republics within the Empire, "because we feel that only under the British flag and British protection can the coloured people obtain justice, equality and

[1] Partly due, no doubt, to the use which was now being made of natives as scouts. They were sometimes supplied with a rifle for self-defence. The Boers refused quarter to such of these as fell into their hands, and occasionally murdered in cold blood those whom they suspected of giving intelligence to their enemy (*v.* "*The Times* History of the War in South Africa," VI, pp. 250, 251).

freedom." They trusted that everything would be done in those Colonies to secure liberty and freedom for all civilized people, and that every opportunity would be given to the uncivilized to raise their status. Sir Alfred, in his reply, said that he "thoroughly agreed that it was not race or colour, but civilization, which was the test of a man's capacity for political rights" (Cd. 547, pp. 34, 35).

Concentration Camps

The system of Refugee Camps, to which reference has been made (*v.* p. 205), had arisen out of the desire to protect surrendered burghers and their families. But a new problem arose. It was a characteristic of the guerilla warfare that each farmhouse was a centre of supply, information, and rest for the fighting Boers. Not wearing uniform, they could come and go from commando to farm or town, without fear of detection. It became a military necessity to destroy all the resources of the Boers in the field, including this source of espionage. Grains, flocks, herds were seized; farm buildings destroyed. What was then to happen to the women and children thus left homeless and starving? It was entirely within their military rights for the British to leave them to their fate. If they had done so, the resistance of the Boers would probably have collapsed. But with quixotic humanity, the system of Refugee Camps was extended to the families of the fighting Boers. There they were fed, clothed, housed and educated.

At the Middelburg Conference, Kitchener had suggested to Botha that the homes of families whether of fighting, surrendered, or neutral burghers should be left undisturbed by either side, unless they gave active assistance to their relations in the field. Botha would not listen to this offer. He was entitled, he said, to force every man to join him, and if they did not do so, "to confiscate their property and leave their families on the veldt." As to the surrendered burghers and their families, he held that the only way was for Kitchener to send them out of the country. For if caught, they must suffer. Kitchener was thus left with practically no choice but to pursue his plan of sweeping the inhabitants of certain areas into the protection of the British lines. So he informed Botha that, "owing to the irregular manner in which you continue to conduct hostilities by forcing unwilling and peaceful inhabitants to join your commandos, a proceeding totally unauthorized by the recognized customs of war, I . . . am forced to take the very

unpleasant and repugnant step of bringing in the women and children." [1]

The extension of the system of Concentration Camps to the wives and families of combatants, thus forced upon the British Commander by the Boer Generals, was secretly welcomed by the Boers themselves, for it enabled them to remain in the field without anxiety for their dependants.

The Diary of a Boer prisoner records (Sept. 23, 1901), "Now that our food supply is scarcer, we see more than ever what a service the English have done us in taking away our women folk. However severely the defenceless victims of the war have had to suffer, they would have had a much worse time of it, and made continuous resistance wellnigh impossible, if the enemy had left them among us. How terribly they would have suffered for want of food and clothing. . . ."

"One is only too thankful nowadays," said General Botha on May 20, 1902, "to know that our wives are under English protection." [2]

It is not a little ironical that, whilst Boers in the field were thus admitting among themselves their contentment with the humanity of their foes, which enabled them to prolong the war, the Concentration Camps were being furiously denounced by their friends, first in England, and then in South Africa, and on the Continent. But whilst the Boers in public made a show of denouncing what they termed war upon women and children, they did not accept Kitchener's offer to hand them over to the Commandos.

Camps, then, were established for hostile, as well as friendly and destitute, non-combatants. By June the white inmates numbered 85,000; by October, 118,000, besides 43,000 coloured. Though the system owed its inception to the military, the administration of the camps was taken over by the civil authorities of the new Colonies in June, of Natal in October. One of Sir Alfred's first steps had been to set on foot the work of educating the children in the camps. It was most successfully inaugurated and organized by Mr. E. B. Sargant, who summoned to his aid volunteer women teachers from all over the Empire.[3] By October, two-thirds of the children, and a large number of adults were on the school roll.

Unhappily, sickness was soon rife. The sites of the camps had been hurriedly selected, and in some cases were ill-chosen. The

[1] Cd. 902, p. 119. [2] De Wet, "Three Years of War," App. C.
[3] See "*The Times* History of the War in South Africa," VI, pp. 34–6.

number of refugees to be dealt with grew rapidly and beyond expectation. There were epidemics of measles and pneumonia. The poor condition of many of the refugees, and the primitive habits of the Boer women, who refused to submit to medical treatment or to conform to sanitary regulations,[1] added to the rate of mortality, which in some cases, notably at Bloemfontein, reached a distressingly high figure. No effort and no expense were spared in dealing with the problem as soon as it was fully realized. Chamberlain was very much alive to the exigencies of the case. Camps were broken up, thinned out, and transplanted, and huts substituted for tents, so far as material was available. Officers trained in relief work were brought from India. Milner, much distressed by the sickness in the camps, wrote in November that practically his whole time was absorbed by it.[2]

No attempt will be made to give any indication of the mass of minor details with which the High Commissioner was occupied in connection with the administration of these camps. A whole series of Blue Books was published,[3] in which his activities are shown, and the strenuous efforts by which the conditions were improved, until the death-rate in the camps was presently reduced to below that which normally obtained in the farms on the veldt.[4]

Public attention had first been directed to the seriousness of the evil by Miss Emily Hobhouse, who visited the camps early in the year. Unfortunately, she was unable to refrain from displaying political bias on an avowedly non-political mission. The animus shown in her reports roused heated controversy as to British humanity, which tended to obscure the issue. The effect of her visits to the camps, too, had been to stir up discontent among the refugees. Milner gave careful consideration to her suggestions in June, but recommended that she should not be allowed to return to South Africa. She endeavoured to do so, and created an hysterical scene when prevented from landing. Investigations by responsible bodies, however, such as the Society of Friends, were welcomed by the High Commissioner. Great service was rendered by the sensible suggestions of a Committee of ladies, headed by Mrs.

[1] The mortality in the Transvaal under the old regime was enormous.

[2] Cd. 583, Nos. 16, 32.

[3] Cd. 608, 694, 789, 793, 819, 853, 893, 902, 934, 936, 939, 942, 1161.

[4] From Natal, Lieut.-Governor Sir H. McCallum reported in Feb. a death-rate of only 23 per hundred. There was even matter for some discontent that better provision was made for Boer than for British refugees (Milner Papers, XVIII, ii and iii).

Fawcett, which was appointed by the War Office in July to make inquiries and recommendations (Cd. 893).

Extract from Memorandum by Lord Milner.

. . . Every farm had become a supply depot for the enemy, enabling him to concentrate at will and refit his commando with food and munitions of war. . . . To have denuded the farms and left the women and children to subsist as best they could would have been entirely within the military rights of the British. Even had the civil population remained neutral such a course would not have been in opposition to the established usage of war, but so far from preserving such an attitude, the women had actively assisted the combatants by furnishing them with exact information regarding all British movements. The military situation demanded that the enemy should be deprived of such a system of intelligence, and humanity induced the British Commander to remove the inhabitants from the farms and assemble them in concentration camps, where they have at all times received food similar to that provided for the British soldier, as well as shelter and other comforts. . . . The high rate of mortality in the camps has been mainly due to the deplorable state of starvation and sickness in which great numbers of the people arrived at the camps, and which rendered them easy victims to the attack of epidemic diseases. This mortality would have been considerably higher had these thousands of women and children been allowed to live on isolated farms in a desolate country, or to roam about in the trail of the commandos. Latterly the condition of the concentration camps has greatly improved, and as a proof that the Boers themselves who are now in the field appreciate the great care that is being lavished upon their families, it may be cited that on several occasions requests have come from Commandos that women who were accompanying them might be admitted to the camps. To allege that in the conduct of the war " noble and generous traditions have not been followed," and that " measures of warfare which belong to a past age " have been employed, is a very grave misrepresentation, which can in no single respect be substantiated by actual fact.

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

4/11/01. . . . The mortality in the concentration camps has undoubtedly roused deep feeling among people who cannot be classed with the pro-Boers. It does not seem to me altogether a complete answer to say that the aggregation of people who are specially liable to infectious disease had produced a state of things

which is inevitable. . . . Personally, as you know, I have always doubted the wisdom or necessity of this concentration, but, be that as it may, we ought to give some evidence of exceptional measures when the concentration has the results shown by recent statistics. . . .

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

7/11/01. . . . As regards concentration camps I should greatly regret any general change of policy, though I realize that if present death-rate continues some at least of camps may have to be abandoned. I did not originate this plan, but as we have gone so far with it, I fear that a change now might only involve us in fresh and greater evils. Condition of camps may still improve, as hitherto all efforts have been swamped by constant influx of fresh thousands of people enfeebled by starvation and exposure, and in many cases already suffering from disease. But there cannot now be many left to bring in. Preparations are being made in Natal to receive several thousands, which will relieve pressure to some extent. But I fear bulk will always have to be provided for in new territories, as in many cases we are under promise not to remove people from their own districts and the capacity of Natal is limited, while there are grave political objections to removing them to Cape Colony. To allow them out if they choose, would in my opinion be a mistake. The vast majority would not avail themselves of offer, having nowhere to go to, while a few mischief makers would gladly do so. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

7/12/01. . . . The black spot—the one very black spot—in the picture is the frightful mortality in the Concentration Camps. I entirely agree with you in thinking, that while a hundred explanations may be offered and a hundred excuses made, they do not really amount to an adequate defence. I should much prefer to say at once, as far as the Civil authorities are concerned, that we were suddenly confronted with a problem not of our making, with which it was beyond our power properly to grapple. And no doubt its vastness was not realized soon enough. It was not till six weeks or two months ago that it dawned on me personally (I cannot speak for others), that the enormous mortality was not merely incidental to the first formation of the camps and the sudden inrush of thousands of people already sick and starving, but was going to continue. The fact that it continues is no doubt a condemnation of the Camp system. The whole thing, I think now, has been a mistake. At the same time a sudden reversal of

policy would only make matters worse. At the present moment certainly, everything we know of is being done, both to improve the camps and to reduce the numbers in them. I believe we shall mitigate the evil, but we shall never get rid of it. While I say all this, I do not admit that the mortality would have been less if the people had been left in the veldt. I do not think it would. But our great error has been in taking a course which made us responsible, or partly responsible, for mischiefs which ought to have rested on the shoulders of the enemy. But it is easy to be wise after the event. The state of affairs which led to the formation of the camps was wholly novel and of unusual difficulty, and I believe no General in the world would not have felt compelled to deal with it in some drastic manner. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Haldane.

8/12/01. [VERY CONFIDENTIAL] . . . Before your letter of October 6th reached me, anxiety about these camps had already taken the first place in my many cares, and since then the camps have taken most of my time, much to the detriment of other business. I am sorry to say I fear, without undervaluing the great amount of excellent and devoted work done in the camps, that the whole thing has been a sad fiasco. We attempted an impossibility—and certainly I should never have touched the thing if, when the " concentration " first began, I could have foreseen that the soldiers meant *to sweep the whole population of the country* higgledy piggledy into a couple of dozen camps. . . . However, the thing is done now, and we must struggle with the consequences. Boers make bad aggregations. They are accustomed to living at great distances from one another in the " grand air." They have no idea how to make close cohabitation tolerable. This is the root difficulty. It might have been got over to some extent by *very* [*im*]*perfect arrangements*, as to (i) construction and equipment of camps, (ii) supply of food, medicines, etc., and (iii) discipline. The two first were impossible owing to difficulties of transport, the third—and this was the most serious thing of all—was difficult, owing to the lack of *suitable human material*. A great deal depends upon the Superintendents and other officers of the camp, and upon the character of doctors, matrons and nurses. We were terribly short in all these respects. South Africa, drained as she always has been by the war, and with all her best ability already engaged in other directions, *simply had not got the men and women we wanted.* Even now some of the best camp superintendents are men with other business urgently requiring their attention, and only sticking to their job from a sense of duty and under extreme pressure from

us. Things are improving a little. The Railways work so much better now that we are getting up lots of things for the camps, which formerly were quite unobtainable. Soon doctors, nurses, matrons, and I hope some camp managers will be pouring in from home and from India. Then again we are starting a number of new camps in Natal and the Colony. . . . Things will improve, but it will always remain a bad business, the one thing, as far as I am concerned, in which I feel that the abuse so freely heaped upon us for everything we have done and not done is not without some foundation. One can't do more than one can, alas ! and the number of things I have had to attend to these three years was more than any single man, or any three men, could possibly have looked after without something going wrong. You can carry two pails of water, one in each hand, and possibly, with skill, you may sling two more, one from each shoulder, and balance one on your head. But if you are asked to carry another with your teeth, and carry six others *somehow* all at once, it can't be done, and *something* must be spilled. . . .

A happier note was sounded in the North. Excellent progress was being made in education and pacification in the Zeerust and Lichtenberg districts, which had been occupied and were being held by Lord Methuen. Milner welcomed Methuen's reports as demonstrating the progress that could be made in " what I have ventured to christen ' protected areas ' " (Milner to Brodrick, 12/7/00 ; Milner Papers, XXXVIII, ii, 58 ; XLV, iii, 100).

As the war drew to a close, Milner scrutinized carefully the lists which were being prepared of those who should be honoured by the King. War honours, he insisted, must come first. Those who had " worked like slaves and taken risks at a time of national danger " must be first recognized. But even if the ordinary political honours were postponed for a while, there was danger of swamping Michael and George. " There ought to be a special Order," he wrote (anticipating a necessity realized in the Great War) ; and again, referring to the services of Dr. Jane Waterston, " And what can be done for a woman who is worth a dozen men ? ; or for an American, like Mr. Lindley ? " [1]

[1] Dr. Waterston was the first woman doctor in South Africa, and one of the most remarkable and stalwart people in Cape Town. Her work for Refugees at the outbreak of the war and after was beyond praise. Dr. Waterston died in 1932 at the age of 90, after a life of heroic self-sacrifice as medical missionary and social worker. Mr. James Bryant Lindley, son of an American missionary, was, in fact, himself born in Natal and a British subject.

The foolish, and in some cases mischievous, behaviour of some Englishwomen in South Africa should not be allowed to obscure the good work done by many women during the war, both in nursing and on Committees such as Mrs. Fawcett's, and the Guild of Loyal Women (parent of the Victoria League), and the British Women's Emigration Society.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Lord Roberts.

London. 10/8/01. . . . I hope any help in your power may be given to the South Africa Expansion of the British Women's Emigration Society. It is in the hands of a Committee of ladies who are excellent in every way, and the moving spirit, Mrs. Evelyn Cecil, is as businesslike as she is devoted. They are going to be of great assistance to us in the settlement of the country. . . . Good-bye and many, many thanks to you for your kindness to me both here and in South Africa. You have no warmer admirer than Yours very sincerely Milner.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to the Hon. Mrs. Lyttelton Gell.

14/3/01. . . . My advice is to co-operate for all you are worth with the Loyal Women's League. They are very much abused, but they are only abused by those who don't like loyalty and are trying to make out that it is a party movement. All this is nonsense. The League is quite sensible and not at all anti-Dutch. Their objects are such as every decent person would approve, and the movement is gaining considerable influence. . . .

When acknowledging the presentation of an Address to the Queen from this Guild, which had been formed when the tide of rebellion in the Colony was at its height, Sir Alfred made some interesting observations upon local and Imperial patriotism. He particularly welcomed in the Address its appreciation of what is meant by citizenship of the British Empire. "That," said Sir Alfred, "is what we all need so greatly, not only in the Cape Colony, or in the Colonies generally, but quite as much in Great Britain itself. Do not think it is inconsistent with local patriotism. Quite the reverse. The latest political red herring is an attempt to confuse the minds of men about the real issue at the bottom of the present struggle, which is simply whether this country shall be inside or outside the British Empire, by representing it as a struggle between those who think first of the good of South Africa, and those whose interests and sympathies lie outside. . . . Speaking as an Imperialist, I can only say that it is not only consistent with

my political creed, but it is an essential part of it, that South Africans should be governed in the interest, and by the agency, of the people whose lives are bound in it, who feel for it, and who work for it, as their home. But the spirit of local patriotism, which I for one desire to see strengthened, not weakened, is liable to two aberrations. It is a mistake that such patriotism can only be found, or only exist in full measure, in born South Africans. Nothing can be more unwise in a young country than to make distinctions between those who are born in it, and those who have come from outside, provided they are equally attached to it, equally prepared to serve it as their home. And it is even a greater and more vital mistake to regard a devotion to South Africa as inconsistent with, much more as antagonistic to a devotion to the British Empire. If there is one thing of which I am absolutely convinced, it is that the highest interests of South Africa itself make for its inclusion in that great association of free and self-governing communities which is known as the British Empire—and the existence of which as a unit of invincible power, is essential to the maintenance of the political ideals which these communities have in common, and which mean so much for the whole future of humanity.". . .[1]

In returning thanks to the Guild through its President, Mrs. Arderne, for an address of welcome on his return in 1903, Milner added :

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mrs. Arderne.

23/12/03. . . . I have watched with the deepest interest and satisfaction the growth of your Society and the successful federation of its branches. I believe the example you have set will not be without its effect in advancing the ideal of a United South Africa, ready to take its place in the still greater Union of " All the Britains." Amity, unity and loyalty are your watchwords. The women of the country can exercise a most potent influence in promoting them all, in drawing closer the bonds between the several parts of South Africa and the different sections of its population, as well as in fostering a feeling of attachment to the Throne and to the great sister-nations which own the same allegiance. . . .

[1] *Cape Argus* Report, 25/4/01.

CHAPTER VII

The New Colonies, Leave, and a Peerage

The New Colonies

WHILST the state of the Cape Colony required a Governor's whole attention, the civil settlement of the new Colonies became daily more pressing. Sir Alfred therefore proposed to Chamberlain (Dec., 1900) that he should transfer himself and his staff thither in the first week of the New Year, but that his appointment as Governor should be deferred for the present. He would act as Administrator under the Commission of October 8 until his Letters Patent and Instructions passed.

Chamberlain had suggested that the High Commissioner should take a rest at the beginning of the year before entering upon the administration of the new Colonies. But De Wet's invasion rendered that impossible (Milner Papers, XLI, ii, 2).

Extract from Telegram. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

7/1/01. . . . I greatly appreciate the kind consideration for myself which prompted your suggestion, but I could not with an easy conscience take leave now, nor is it a matter of immediate urgency. I am very tired mentally and a rest would make me more efficient. But my physical health remains good. I sleep perfectly. My nerves are quite unaffected. And in view of the great and imminent danger to the Colony I feel, however egotistical it may sound, that I cannot be spared just now. What I think best is that, if we can turn this corner and I can go north for a few months just to lay the foundations of civil government and start the principal officers on their respective tasks, I should then immediately take leave for three months. This might be in about April or May. I could then return with renewed vigour to deal with the problems, for which the preliminary work might be more or less got through in my absence. I have arranged for a house in Johannesburg and will go there as soon as the invasion is either crushed or confined within such limits as to render it comparatively innocuous. At the present moment I regret to say

that we are still in danger of a temporary subversion of authority over the greater part of the Colony. I accordingly propose to stay here for the present, but I have asked Hutchinson to hold himself in readiness to come here at short notice as soon as I can get away. I have perfect confidence in his ability to deal with the grave difficulties which are before us here for a long time to come, but it would make a bad impression for me to quit the helm at the very height of the storm.

But a month later, Sir Alfred was proposing to start.

Extract from Telegram. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

8/2/01. . . . The time has now come when I think I had better go north. . . . I should have liked to wait till Colony was clear of the enemy, but this may take a long time, and I have already done all I can do personally for Colonial Defence. Ministers are now thoroughly roused and considering numbers of Colonists already at front, new Defence Force is rolling up splendidly. . . .

Chamberlain gave Sir Alfred full discretion to go to Johannesburg when he thought best, and to arrange with Hely Hutchinson to come from Natal to Cape Town, and there to handle the very thorny political and constitutional problems arising out of the war.

Before leaving, Sir Alfred prepared for the benefit of his successor a lengthy survey of the situation at the Cape, containing advice and information as to the financial position, the organization of forces for the defence of the Colony, compensation for losses, possession of arms, treatment of rebels, and the constitutional question (Milner Papers, XX, i, 1).

Sir Alfred left Cape Town on February 28 to open the new chapter, the greatest and most difficult chapter, in his work in South Africa. But with the task of reconstruction he was for the present destined to make little progress. For from Bloemfontein he was hurried to Pretoria to take his part in the abortive Peace Negotiations (Ch. VI). When they were concluded, he took up his residence at Sunnyside, a house on the outskirts of Johannesburg.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mrs. Montefiore.

JOHANNESBURG. 22/3/01. . . . Here we are settled at last in a villa, which might be the residence of a prosperous London tradesman at Hendon or Chislehurst. It is on the outskirts of Johannesburg, on the top of a hill to the north of the town, well away from mines and places of business, and looking over a magnificent rolling country north towards Pretoria. The climate

is splendid, and we are nearly 6,000 feet above the sea. . . . Here I mean to stay, at any rate till I have had a run home. . . . For . . . though I am busy and a much-wanted man, I shall be much busier when the war is over. And that, I fear, is not yet. Indeed, the war is *never going to come to a definite end.* It will just gradually die out, as the resources of the enemy become more and more exhausted, and we shall have gradually to restart business, and may see the mines in full swing again, before the last commandos have dispersed. . . .

In the Orange River Colony, Major (Sir Hamilton) Goold-Adams, the Administrator of British Bechuanaland, had, as Deputy Administrator, already taken over the administration from General Pretyman (Feb. 3). Mr. (Sir) H. F. Wilson was appointed Secretary, Mr. A. Browne, Treasurer, and Mr. L. A. Tancred, Legal Adviser to the Administration. By degrees, resident magistrates were entrusted with the duties hitherto performed by military Commissioners. The old Free State officials were as far as possible retained in the civil departments. Revenue was collected and budgets prepared. In June a criminal Court was established for trying without jury civilians charged with serious offences, whilst resident magistrates were given a limited jurisdiction in civil cases. But Martial Law remained also in force, and the inhabitants were liable to be tried by military tribunals for breaches of regulations under it.

Much of Sir Alfred's time and energy from now onwards were consumed in endeavouring to reconcile the conflicting interests arising from the formation of a civil administration in an enemy country subject to military authority, and liable to be the scene of fluctuating military operations. Inevitably, military considerations clashed with the purely political and civilian outlook of those who had to look to subsequent settlement and reconciliation of the warring races.

For a time, indeed, the attempt to build up a fabric of civil government was brought to a standstill. Kitchener's sudden orders for evacuating towns and clearing districts, because they had come again within the sphere of Boer operations, although they had hitherto remained quiet or been resettled, caused grave bitterness and unrest. British loyalists, no less than Boers who had kept the peace on promise of protection, suffered severely from this sweeping process, accompanied as it was in too many cases by undisciplined looting (Milner Papers, XIX, ii, 103). Clearly, from the military

point of view, there was justification enough for clearing districts which came within the radius of the enemy's rapidly moving commandos and patrols, in order to prevent their being aided or rejoined by sympathizers. But the political effects were likely to be most unfortunate. Both General Pretyman and Major Goold-Adams agreed with Mr. J. G. Fraser in making representations to this effect. Sir Alfred took the same view and urged it strongly on Kitchener.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lord Kitchener.

JOHANNESBURG. 20/3/01. . . . I enclose a wail from Goold-Adams. I have had similar wails before from other persons in the Orange River Colony. It does seem to me that something might be done, not indeed to make the policy of "clearing the country" more harmful to the enemy, for I expect the columns already do all that is possible in that direction, but to prevent its hitting our own friends. I should have thought that there would be no great difficulty in settling upon certain areas sufficiently within the protection of our posts and garrisons to justify their being exempted from a general order to sweep up all the live stock of the country. Surely the G.O.C. and Goold-Adams could between them agree which districts might receive such favoured treatment. Gradually, as the country became more settled, an increasing number of areas might be brought within the category of more favoured districts. The idea of exempting certain districts from the sweeping process, as opposed to that of driving all stock indiscriminately into a few camps, has the following advantages: (1) It will make a distinction, intelligible to everybody, between enemy's country and *our* country, and a distinction to the advantage of the latter. This must tend to make people desire to settle down. (2) It will encourage the tendency of the Boers under our protection to take up arms, to help to keep the other Boers off. They will fight for their cattle on their own ground, as they will for nothing else. This will widen the breach, which it is all our interest to widen. (3) The cattle will live instead of dying. . . .

Steps were presently taken in the direction thus suggested. The South African Constabulary, which had been raised for policing the new Colonies, was indeed largely diverted to military duties. Sir Alfred, in January, had expressed in a letter to Chamberlain his appreciation of the high quality of the recruits sent for this force from England, and had added that whilst our wandering columns in the field could give no permanent security to the

inhabitants, disorders would continue. But where the Mounted Police could hold a point or points in a district permanently, they could provide the support which the bulk of the Free Staters needed to stay on their farms (Milner Papers, XIX, ii, 100 ; LV, vi, 79). Such posts were gradually established by the South African Constabulary from east to west, from Thaba 'Nchu to Jacobsdal, and with the aid of Burgher Police, recruited from surrendered Boers, an area round Bloemfontein was held, within which farmers could cultivate the land and concentrate their flocks and herds.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

28/3/01. . . . Things at Bloemfontein are going well, as far as they can. Government is more or less a farce, with the country swarming with brigands and nothing but the railway line and a few towns really in our possession. But the little administration does well what little it has to do, and will manage all the rest, as it *falls* in. Goold-Adams and Wilson work well together. They are sensible, much liked, and, Heaven be praised, quite un-self-advertising. They are content to do quietly what they can do, and to wait patiently for the time when more will be possible. I saw Lyttelton, too, at Bloemfontein. He is a good fellow and a strong level-headed soldier, not brilliant, but essentially competent. I hope to goodness they leave him here in chief command when Kitchener goes. They could not better him. . . .

In the Transvaal the change over to civil government proceeded along similar lines. There Mr. Fiddes had been appointed Secretary to the Administration ; Sir Richard Solomon, Legal Adviser ; and Mr. Wybergh, Acting Commissioner for Mines. Here, as in the Orange River Colony, the capacity of the Legal Adviser was of the highest importance ; for his task would include the revision of the statute laws of the Republic. No less important was the office of Treasurer, for upon the solution of immense and complicated problems of finance the rapid and successful rehabilitation of the country would largely depend. Mr. Patrick Duncan, who had been Sir Alfred's private Secretary when he was Chairman of the Inland Revenue Board, came out from England at his request to fill this post.

For Johannesburg and the Rand, municipal government was substituted for the military governorship, a nominated Town Council being presided over by Major O'Meara, hitherto Mayor.[1]

[1] Cd. 903, pp. 33–44.

By the end of March, Sir Alfred was able to inform Mr. Fiddes that only three places on the Municipal Council remained to be filled, and that for one of these, " I intend to find another representative of the working classes." One of his last official acts before sailing on leave (May 8), was to sign the Johannesburg Municipality Proclamation, and to settle this first list of Municipal Councillors, which Mr. Lionel Curtis, Town Clerk of Johannesburg, had brought down to Government House that day.

Many other problems, major and minor, were tackled with characteristic vigour and acumen.

For many years the amalgamation and federation of the railway systems of South Africa had been the ideal for which Cecil Rhodes had been working. It was at last made possible by the War. The task of amalgamating and reorganizing the lines in the new Colonies, and working them on the new basis, was immensely difficult and complicated. It was rendered more so by the confusion and delays caused by military control for military purposes, and by the traditional particularism of inter-colonial interests. From now onwards, Sir Alfred turned with unceasing application to the supervision both of policy and detail in the organization of the Central South African Railway, and the appointment of a capable personnel.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. [Sir] T. R. Price, Chief Traffic Manager, C.G.R.

2/4/01. . . . Many thanks for your two letters. I have only time briefly to refer to the one which deals with the great question of railway amalgamation. I *absolutely agree* with every word you say, but the proposal to leave the Imperial Military Railway under the High Commissioner has met with strong resistance on the part of H.M. Government, and I have had to abandon it. There is, however, no fear of a separation of the railways into two systems. They will be worked as one under Colonel [Sir Percy] Girouard, the O.R.C. having no separate administration, but only receiving their share of the profits. I quite agree with you that there will be difficulties before us which might have been avoided by leaving these railways Imperial. On the other hand, I think it is largely a question of *persons*. And this is one reason why I have been so extremely anxious to keep you at the Cape. Any Minister who has you at his elbow will not approach Railway questions from the Cape Colony particularist point of view, as I, assuredly, will not look at them from a purely Transvaal point of view. And I can say the same of Colonel Girouard. . . .

Then there was the Cattle Preservation Department, which had to deal with the feeding of the herds belonging to hostile burghers rounded up by the army.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Fiddes.

30/3/01. . . . *Stock Question.* I am very anxious about this, but I can assure you that the difficulty we have here, great as it is, is small compared with the colossal disaster which threatens us in the Orange River Colony, unless we can either induce the Military to temper their zeal for capturing cattle and sheep with a little discretion, or else push out our Constabulary posts so fast as to increase enormously the area of protected grazing before the winter. I am glad to say Baden-Powell has just placed out 1,000 men in the Bloemfontein District, and I believe we shall save a great quantity of stock by these means. But we want at least four or five areas as big as that now held round Bloemfontein to save the stock already driven in, to say nothing of what may be thrown upon our hands in the next few weeks. . . .

But the most urgent matter was the reopening of the mines, upon which depended not only the prosperity of the Johannesburgers, but also the successful rehabilitation of the whole country.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Fiddes.

30/4/01. . . . No doubt the most important object at the moment is to get the mines to work. I have been struggling against almost superhuman difficulties, which creep up like the heads of a hydra, to remove one obstacle and then another to this. The perversity of human nature in making difficulties could not have been more clearly shown than in this. However, I hope they will begin within a week. . . .

Whilst at Johannesburg in October, 1900, Sir Alfred had informed Kitchener that he thought it was desirable, from a military as well as a political point of view, to allow some thousands of loyalists to return as soon as possible (*v.* Ch. IV and V). He suggested that supplies for their subsistence on their return should be at once sent up to Johannesburg. Boer raids on the railway, however, rendered the problem of supply more difficult than he had anticipated. In the early months of the New Year, he continued to urge upon Kitchener the importance of starting the mines and resettling the Rand. At last, in April, Kitchener permitted three mines to be opened, and the first Uitlander refugees to return. There was also the problem of providing dynamite and labour for the mines.

The supply of natives was inadequate, owing to their absorption in military transport work. Towards the end of the year, therefore, the High Commissioner made an arrangement (known as the *Modus vivendi*, Dec. 18, 1901) by which the Transvaal Native Labour Association was permitted to recruit natives in Portuguese territory for the Rand.[1] But owing to delay in bringing them south, even the limited, though growing, number of stamps allowed was unable to start work.

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Lord Kitchener.

18/2/01. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . If it were possible, *without in any way increasing the difficulty of supply*, to set a few of the mines working, it would, I believe, have a great effect in discouraging the Boers still in the field and hastening a collapse. An opportunity now offers of doing this. Some thousands of natives, who have been in the employ of the Imperial Military Railways, are being dispensed with. To keep them where they are, could not increase the difficulty of rationing, as they have been rationed all along, and the Mines would give anything to keep them. If they could be engaged by the Mines as the Imperial Military Railway dismisses them, they would suffice to start work on two or three of the central Mines along the outcrop. Not only would this mean a certain amount of business, a certain amount of revenue, at once, but it would *keep the natives on the spot.* One of the greatest difficulties, when tranquillity is entirely established, will be to get back a sufficient number of natives to work the Mines. It is a thousand pities to let go any, who are already on the spot. . . .

Other details of administrative reorganization and development in the Transvaal at this period are summarized in "*The Times* History of the War," VI, pp. 29–31. Here, as in the Orange River Colony, the organization of the schools quickly took shape under Mr. E. B. Sargant, an expert of great vigour and originality, whom Sir Alfred had invited to South Africa in the autumn, and who was now Director of Education in both Colonies. Mr. W. A. Russell and Mr. (Major-General Sir) Fabian Ware were presently appointed his Assistant Directors in the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal respectively. Though delayed by the prolongation of the war, the creation of an educational system for the two new Colonies was now begun and steadily pursued. At the end of 1902 the High Commissioner invited the Governors of the other Colonies to confer at Bloemfontein in order to establish a uniform system of

[1] Milner Papers, XVIII, iii. For the *Modus vivendi*, see Ch. XIII.

Public Education and to harmonize codes of instruction, departmental examination and the status of teachers (24/11/02, Milner Papers, XVIII, iii, 73 ; XXXI, iii, 196).

The importance which Sir Alfred attached to this development is indicated in the course of a Memorandum which he handed to Major Hanbury Williams when the latter went to the War Office, and in which he had outlined the views which he had already explained to Chamberlain as to the military and political future of the country (cf. Ch. I, p. 37 ; and Ch. IV, p. 142).

Extract from Memorandum. Sir A. Milner to Major Hanbury Williams.

27/12/00. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . On the political side, I attach the greatest importance of all to the increase of the British population. British and Dutch have to live here on equal terms. If, ten years hence, there are three men of British race to two of Dutch, the country will be safe and prosperous. If there are three of Dutch to two of British, we shall have perpetual difficulty. . . . We not only want a majority of British, but we want a fair margin, because of the large proportion of " cranks " that we British always generate, and who take particular pleasure in going against their own people. It is of great importance to retain in the country as many as possible of those who have served in the war on our side. These will naturally find their way into the Police, the Railway service, the Post Office, and many forms of civil employment. The difficulty is to place any number of them on the land. The majority of the agricultural population will always be Dutch. This does not matter, provided there are some strong English districts and that, in most districts, there are a sufficient number of British to hold their own. A mere sprinkling is no use. They only get absorbed, and become more Dutch than their neighbours. The only way to achieve this is by large purchase of land on the part of the Government with a view to reselling (payments being by instalments) to suitable settlers.

There are a large number of such men among the Colonial contingents, South African and Over Seas, also among the Yeomanry. Men willing to risk some capital of their own should be preferred, and they should be planted on large or middle-sized farms. The idea of settling the ordinary " Tommy " here as a small farmer is in most cases impracticable. There may be a few irrigation colonies near to the large centres of population where the system of *petite culture* can flourish, and where a certain number of selected soldiers can be planted. But this will be the exception, not the rule. (And there are one or two specially well-watered districts like Rustenburg which would do for small

farms.) Our great hope is in getting a considerable number—several thousands—of settlers of a *superior class*, and placing them in districts where there is already a British nucleus, preferably in the eastern parts of the Colony, in the conquered Territory, and in the southern and south-western districts of the Transvaal—these are good agricultural districts. Well-selected settlers will flourish there and raise large families. They will get on all right with the Dutch, where they are not too greatly outnumbered.

The common interest of British and Dutch in agriculture will go a great way to break down the barriers of separation existing at present between the two races, and which will always exist as long as one race absorbs one set of employments and the other a different set. A healthy social and political condition of South Africa would be the following: Assuming that 60 per cent. of the white population will shortly be industrial and commercial, and 40 per cent. agricultural, then I should like to see 45 out of the 60 British and 15 Dutch, 15 out of the 40 British and 25 Dutch. The former proportion will accomplish itself. It will not be long, with the influx of new population to the Mines and elsewhere, before three-fourths of the industrial and commercial population are British. But to make even as much as two-fifths of the agricultural population British will take some working. It is only to be done by bringing British settlers, through Government Agency, in considerable numbers into the districts I have specified.

Next to the composition of the population, the thing which matters most is its education. In the agricultural parts of Cape Colony, this needs to be completely overhauled. Next to an Arms Act, it should be the principal concern of the new Governor. In the new Colonies the case will be easier to deal with, provided we make English *the language of all higher education.* Dutch should only be used to teach English, and English to teach everything else. Language is important, but the tone and spirit of the teaching conveyed in it is even more important. Not half enough attention has been paid to school reading books. To get these right would be the greatest political achievement conceivable. I attach especial importance to school *history books.* A good world-history would be worth anything. At present children are only taught the history of South Africa, with at most a little English history, of the narrowest purely English type, thrown in. Everything that makes South African children look outside South Africa and *realize the world* makes for peace. Everything that cramps and confines their views to South Africa only (limits their historical reading, for instance, to Slagter's Nek and Dingaan's Day, and Boomplaats and Majuba) makes for Afrikanderdom and further discord.

Generally speaking, our political aim should be to work *towards* Federation, by making, or keeping, as many branches of Government as possible common to two, or more, or all the Colonies. . . . I believe a great deal can be done to federate *practically and in detail*, before we embark on the discussion of a federal constitution, just as I believe in a lot of *virtual self-government* in the new Colonies, without letting the supreme control out of Imperial hands. We must be very sure of our ground before we part with executive authority. Indeed, I hope that there may never be " responsible Government " in the two Colonies as separate States, but that we shall always keep Imperial control over them till we can with safety grant " responsible government " to a Federated South Africa. . . .

This document contains the kernel of all Milner's policy of reconstruction. A strong and rapid increase of the British element was desired, not merely to swamp the retrogressive Dutch vote, but as a means of breaking down the barriers between the two races, and introducing a progressive element in political outlook as in the standard of agriculture. Milner's desire was not in the least to dominate or overwhelm the Dutch, but so to balance the population and to fuse the interests of the two races that they might advance towards the larger ideal of a South African Nation, undisturbed by racial jealousies and ambitions. British settlers, then, must be established upon the land, both to ensure against the recurrence of disorder and to prevent racial cleavage on the lines of country Dutch and British industrial population of the towns. Such colonists, of a good class, would disseminate the leaven of British political ideals, and prepare the way for the concession of representative government. For Sir Alfred insisted, as Lord Durham had insisted in the case of Canada, that the institution of responsible government must await the establishment of a population with some experience of free institutions and clean justice, and the development of an electorate which had had time to settle down and to learn to differ on other than racial lines. Once these lessons had been learned, once British ideals, social and political, had been assimilated, the Dutch majority, if it were a majority, might be entrusted with the self-government it so ardently desired. To secure these ends—an increasing British population and economic and political progress—money was the first essential. Money must be obtained from South Africa's one source of wealth, the mines, and by loans or gifts from Great Britain. From a settlement on these lines would spring a

united South Africa, and from its union, a British South Africa which "would go a long way to consolidate the Empire." [1]

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. William Hill.

22/1/01. . . . Many thanks for sending me your article. . . . I do not in the least share the apprehension, which apparently is so widely prevalent, that the result of the annexation of the Transvaal to the British Dominions will be to increase the hold of the capitalists and monopolists upon the country. I do not share the unfavourable opinion, I might say prejudice, which exists against the capitalists of the Transvaal as a body among those who have a less intimate acquaintance with South Africa than I have. What I do know is, that the so-called Republican Government of the Transvaal was at the mercy of capitalists of the very worst type, and that the grossest instances of jobbery and corruption known to me, such as the sacrifice of great public interests to influential and unscrupulous individuals with long purses, occurred under the government, if not always with the personal connivance, of President Kruger. We shall do better than that, however badly we may do. . . .

Affairs having thus been put in train in the new Colonies, Sir Alfred decided that the moment had at last arrived when he might take a short rest. Apart from considerations of personal health, he felt that the opportunity of conferring personally not only with the Secretary of State, but also with moderate members of the Opposition, would be of great advantage to the public service (3/4/01, Milner Papers, XLI, ii, 20).

Extract from Letter. Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

29/3/01. . . . I am increasingly convinced that if I am ever to get away from South Africa for a break, I must get away now. However busy I am, I shall be busier when Martial Law is removed, or relaxed, and the great rush of work which will result from a return to normal conditions, comes upon us. And I should not face that work with any confidence of getting through it without a change. . . . [After making suggestions for the administration in his absence, with Kitchener as Acting High Commissioner, he concluded]: . . . There is a great deal, which I am anxious to explain to you, and which I have really no time *to expound adequately* by despatch. If I could get four or five fundamental points settled, it would immensely facilitate my, and I venture to think, *your* task. But I despair of settling them except by conference, without

[1] Speech by Lord Milner at Johannesburg, 8/1/02.

great waste of time and many misunderstandings. Besides there is a lot of nonsense being talked and written at home—I do not mean by the rabid pro-Boers, who are quite hopeless, but by fair-minded critics who are only ignorant—which I feel sure I could do something, privately, to dispel. . . .

Chamberlain was careful to guard against any suggestion of recall. " In view of the agitation of pro-Boers here and in South Africa for your recall," he cabled, " you should send an official application for leave, fully explaining the circumstances, which might be published if necessary, so that it is made perfectly clear beyond all possible doubt that it is your own wish and necessity of temporary leave for sake of health which prompt your request, and not any suggestion from here. . . ." (1/4/01 ; cf. Cd. 547, p. 77).

The news of his intended leave was, in fact, at once represented as an order of recall, and it was remembered that Mr. Courtney, who had started the anti-Milner campaign, had formerly succeeded in obtaining from Gladstone the head of Sir Bartle Frere on a charger, much to the satisfaction of President Kruger.

The day before Sir Alfred sailed, he was entertained at a luncheon given by the Mayor (Mr. T. J. O'Reilly), Corporation, and Citizens of Cape Town. Of his speech on that occasion he noted in his *Diary* that it satisfied himself, " which my speeches very rarely do."

Replying to the toast of his health, proposed by Mr. J. L. Brown, Sir Alfred asked his hosts to be confident that there would be no weakening in the policy of H.M. Government, and that the duty of the Empire to the South African Loyalists would not be forgotten.

" Nothing," he said, " in this whole weary business is more profoundly satisfactory than the manner in which the British nation throughout the world, when once it was awakened to the real issue in South Africa—I admit it was not easy to wake them—set their teeth in unmistakable earnestness to put an end once for all to the uncertainty, the conflict of incompatible ideals, which made peace and progress in South Africa under the old system impossible. Flinching from no sacrifice, daunted by no disappointment, turning a deaf ear to the babel of voices for ever tending to confuse, to smother the one cardinal point under a mass of side issues ; they have gone straight on the way upon which they were set from the first, namely, to make an end of this business once and for all—to make this one country under one flag, with one system of law and government, a liberal and just one ; and to leave no room for a

recrudescence of the ambitions that have plunged us into these terrible disasters, from which we are now slowly emerging. If I were not absolutely confident of that, I should not be taking a return ticket to-day. . . . Where I perhaps differ from some of my friends is in a tendency to look ahead—in the habit of trying to form a mental picture of the time when those who have been our enemies in the past, and many of them who are our enemies even to-day, will no longer be our foemen, but fellow-citizens, and many of them, I believe, sound and true ones. It is my impression that there are not a few of those who have been sturdiest in their allegiance to their old flag who, when once the conflict is over, when once they have accepted the situation, will be also faithful to their new allegiance ; and if that is so, then surely it is a point of honour with us to let them see that we have absolutely no vindictive feelings with regard to the past, but that if they are once prepared frankly to accept their position of citizens of our Empire, the same rights and privileges, aye, and the same solicitude for their welfare on the part of the Government, will be extended to them as to their older fellow-citizens. Once frankly and whole-heartedly within the pale, there should be no distinction. The old and the new have got to fuse into one nation. . . ."

In conclusion he was able to add a passage which showed how much progress had been made since the despatch of February 6 : " I am leaving South Africa to-morrow, not indeed without many anxieties, but in a far happier frame of mind than I should have done if I had left it six months ago, or even two months ago, when I first went up to assume my new duties. I have seen the strength of the yet remaining enemy slowly diminishing under the iron grip of Lord Kitchener. I have seen the first beginning of the first civil government, and the first steps, necessarily modest ones, towards the resumption of industry, and I feel confident that by the time I return I shall see great progress, and that the long patience and endurance with which thousands of South Africans endured the dark days will be rewarded by prosperity and a new era. . . . "

Sir Alfred sailed for England in the *Saxon* on May 8, after working at very high pressure up to the last moment. On the voyage he found himself " mentally quite torpid," and passed the time talking with passengers, playing an occasional game of whist, or deck quoits, " sifting old letters," reading back numbers of *The Times* and *Daily Express*, Herndon's " Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln," " honest and therefore interesting " ; Lady Anne Barnard's " Letters

from the Cape," " delightful creature, a most delightful book " ; and Maurice Hewlett's " Richard Yea and Nay."

Madeira was reached on the 20th, and there, among a mass of letters and papers, a telegram awaited him from Chamberlain which he evidently thought was a hoax. No mention of it is made in the *Diary*, but its contents are indicated by Chamberlain's letter, which, with a sheaf of telegrams from other friends, greeted his arrival at Southampton.

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir A. Milner.

23/5/01. . . . The telegram sent to Madeira was not a hoax. At my suggestion the King has decided to receive you immediately on your arrival in London, and Lord Salisbury and I will be waiting at Waterloo to take you at once to Marlborough House. After the Luncheon on Saturday, which will be attended by the Duke of Cambridge, the Commander-in-Chief, and most of the Ministers, I am going to Highbury for the holidays. I know nothing of your arrangements, but I hope they are such as to give you complete rest. I have discouraged dinners and functions till the end of your stay, when no doubt your friends will wish to give you a send-off. Meanwhile I hope it may be possible for you to give me a few *quiet* days in which we can really talk over matters, without the interruptions of public and parliamentary duties which absorb so much of my time during the Session.

Sir Alfred was accorded a remarkable welcome at Waterloo. Practically the whole Cabinet, and Lord Roberts, were there to receive him. After greetings, he was taken in an open landau by the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for the Colonies to Marlborough House. An enthusiastic demonstration by the public on the way was followed by a long audience with King Edward, who conferred upon him the honour of a peerage. The title which he took, since he had no landed estate, was Baron Milner of St. James's and Cape Town.

Extract from Diary.

May 24. [*At Southampton*] . . . I was met at the [dock] station by a number of friends, including Lord Grey, Sir Edward Grey, George Wyndham, McIver, Lagden, Sir M. Ommanney, F. Graham, Rose Innes, etc. . . . After a short reception from the Corporation, the train started at 12.35, and reached London about half-past two. Was met on the platform by Salisbury, Chamberlain, Halsbury, Lansdowne, A. Balfour, and many other

official personages and private friends. Lord Salisbury drove me, with "Joe," to Marlborough House, where the King received me very graciously and gave me—to my surprise—a peerage. Afterwards "Joe" took me to Duke Street. In the evening I dined with Selborne. . . .

May 25. Hundreds of letters and telegrams arrived. . . . I spent most of the morning preparing a speech, which I subsequently delivered at a lunch to welcome me by "Joe" at Claridge's. This was rather a nervous occasion, but passed off well. . . .

On May 28, Lord Milner, after lunching with Brodrick and paying a visit to the Colonial Office, went to Windsor as the guest of King Edward and Queen Alexandra. There he was introduced to the then new game of Bridge.

Extract from Diary.

May 29. . . . After lunch walked round the Castle with Esher and Lionel Cust. Then . . . a long drive with the Royal family. We all went—the King, Queen, and Princess Victoria with Lady Curzon and myself in one carriage, the rest in another big one. Tea and subsequently rowing and sailing on the lake at Virginia Water. Beautiful drive both ways. . . . A game of "Bridge" after dinner. . . .

Two extracts from the Press may be given as showing the impression produced by the signal and in some ways unique honours thus conferred upon Lord Milner by the King.

From The Rhodesian Herald. *July* 13, 1901.

A Record Creation. Lord Milner is the only man (says the *Birmingham Gazette*), whose peerage has ever been gazetted within four or five days of its conferment. Sir Alfred's new title was conferred upon him on the day of his arrival—Friday—and gazetted on the following Tuesday. . . . It is evident that the Government intend to leave no stone unturned to convince "all whom it may concern" that however distasteful he may be to the Boers, Lord Milner represents the embodied opinion of his country, and that his policy has the fullest support of those whose business it is to follow the dictates of the country's will. . . .

There are three other noticeable circumstances in connection with the new peer. Lord Milner is the first peer who has taken his title from lodgings; the first statesman who, having been received on his arrival in London by almost the whole Administration, was taken on directly to the Sovereign; and the first guest

within memory who, having been invited to dine and sleep at Windsor Castle, has been commanded to stay another night. . . .

From The Times of Natal. *October* 25, 1901.

All classes joined in doing honour to this strong man from South Africa, with the kindly eyes and the steel-wire determination, who had kept the faith of his country and upheld the honour of England in the hour of crisis. "A man with a backbone like a lightning conductor," was Sir James Rose-Innes's description of his Excellency. A man, too, of the sunniest temperament, the kindliest heart, the most liberal culture, the most attractive personality, who, in happier days, will live to see the completion of his task, the attainment of his high and pure ideals.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Fiddes.

7/6/01. . . . I was "jumped" into the Peerage. I should gladly have less honours and fuss, and more solid satisfaction in the shape of getting nearer to the end of fighting. . . .

Paul Villars in Figaro. 30/5/01.

Lord Milner du Cap, comme nous dirions. Quarante-sept ans, grand, mince, légèrement vouté, moustache et cheveux gris, l'œil un peu clignotant depuis son séjour en Egypte, le nez droit, plutôt fort—un de ces nez qu'aimait Wellington—le regard tantôt interrogateur, tantôt pénétrant; au repos, la physionomie est presque ingrate, mais quand Lord Milner parle, son visage s'éclaire, ses traits s'animent, l'expression devient fort agréable, et la voix sonne claire. . . .

Among congratulatory letters was one expressed with characteristic warmth by the Secretary for Scotland.

Extract from Letter. Lord Balfour of Burleigh to Lord Milner.

26/5/01. . . . I suppose I need not assure you (indeed I cannot find words strong enough adequately to do so) of my admiration for your bravery and policy under every difficulty. Anyhow you have no warmer friend or more loyal adherent than I am. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Cromer to Lord Milner.

Cairo. 26/5/01. . . . I must write a line to say how sorry I am not to be in England to join the many who will welcome you. . . . Few, as you may well imagine, have followed your course with greater interest, and, I may add, admiration. You

were right from the first, though it took people in England some little while before they saw it. . . .

Lord Milner, on being given his peerage and having no territorial possession, kept his own name. But he wrote to Sir Frederick Milner, the head of the best-known family of that name, to say that he felt he had to write him a word of explanation as to this monopolizing of the name. The reply was most cordial :

Extract from Letter. Sir Frederick Milner, Bart., to Lord Milner.

27/5/01. . . . I would like to congratulate you most heartily on the signal and richly deserved honour bestowed on you by the King. I am glad you have stuck to the name of Milner, which bids fair to be a household word in this country. . . . 28/5/01. I wrote you enclosed letter last night. This morning I have received your letter, which, if I may say so, is a very characteristic one. I feel certain I can speak for all members of the family when I tell you that we consider the name of Milner has been greatly honoured by your assuming it as your title, and it certainly could not be borne by a more worthy man. Long may you live to bear it, and to add to your laurels.

Extract from Letter. Lord Kitchener to Lord Milner.

31/5/01. . . . Many congratulations on your well-earned peerage. Every one out here is delighted that your work should have been recognized. Your children[1] here are going on all right and giving me no trouble. I have had to give way about the ladies and allow a lot up, otherwise there would have been great discontent. . . . The mines are going on all right and I have arranged for them to get sufficient labour for the present without raising unpleasant questions with the Portuguese. . . . Everything is working smoothly, so you can take your rest in peace and without anxiety. Would that it were all over !

By the Royal favour thus extended to Lord Milner, and followed by his appointment as Privy Councillor, his Sovereign showed his recognition of the signal services he had rendered to the Empire. By the Government, his reception by the whole Ministry and promotion to the Peerage were intended as a demonstration in answer to the *canard* that he had been recalled, and that the Cabinet was divided into Milnerites and anti-Milnerites.

The gesture was needed as a counter-blast to the agitation for Milner's recall as a preliminary step to ending the war by promising

[1] Milner's " Kindergarten," so-called (*see* p. 381).

autonomy to the Boers. This agitation was being conducted by Sauer and Merriman, who had been deputed by the Afrikander Nationalists to co-operate with their friends in England for that purpose. At a banquet given in their honour by prominent Liberal politicians on June 5, Mr. Courtney declared that the annexation of the Republics was " a wrong and a blunder," and that it would be the policy of the Liberal Party to " temper, if not to abrogate it." The Afrikander deputies delivered themselves of virulent attacks upon the High Commissioner.

Milner had already been denounced, as he had remarked in his speech at Cape Town, as " heartless," " bloodthirsty," " narrow-minded," " arrogant," and " a prancing proconsul." Courtney had previously discovered that Milner was " a lost mind " ; he now found that the war was caused by his " want of intelligence." Others borrowed a trick from Cleon, the demagogue, whose reply to the castigation he received from Aristophanes was to charge him with not being a true-born Athenian citizen. Milner's critics now pretended that he was a German. The answer to that is given in Volume I, pp. 1–3 and Appendix.

Shortly after the banquet given to the Boer delegates, a meeting of sympathizers was held at the Queen's Hall, under the presidency of Mr. Labouchere, at which the Transvaal colours were worn ; the Union Jack was hissed, and a member of the audience, who uncovered at the mention of the King, was ejected.

Proceedings of this kind, coupled with monstrous calumnies upon the Imperial troops, caused political feeling to run high. It culminated in a riot, when Mr. Lloyd George appeared at Birmingham, directly after Campbell-Bannerman had declared that no permanent settlement was possible until Chamberlain and Milner had been removed.

The extravagances of the pro-Boer party had the effect of strengthening, instead of weakening the hands of their opponents. The unanimity of the Government, their unabated confidence in the High Commissioner, and their determination to see the struggle through to the only satisfactory conclusion, had been further emphasized by the speeches and attendance at the luncheon given in Milner's honour by Chamberlain on May 25.

Proposing Lord Milner's health, Chamberlain claimed that in performing " one of the most difficult and arduous tasks to which any public servant had ever been called," he had fulfilled the expectation of men of all parties who had been confident that he

would bring to it " a mind trained to judicial investigation, eminently impartial, and a courage and calm resolution which would not fail him in the greatest emergency." His reception must have proved to him that he possessed " the unabated confidence of his Sovereign and of his fellow-countrymen." His greatest work lay yet before him, in establishing the administrative machinery of the new order of things, which it was hoped would unite the two races in the co-operation absolutely necessary for the future welfare of the country, and lay the foundations of a United South Africa as free, as prosperous, and as loyal as the sister Federations of Canada and Australia.

Milner replied that he had been taken aback by the reception accorded him. " In a rational world," he said, " it would have seemed better to all of us, that I should have arrived, and stayed, and returned in the quietest possible manner. But I fully recognize that . . . my doing so would have been misconstrued . . . in a manner and to a degree which would have been injurious to the State. . . . If this hard-begged holiday could be represented as a veiled recall, then, of course, it was obvious that, had I taken the proverbial hansom from Waterloo to my old chambers, that very harmless action would have been trumpeted over two Continents as evidence of my disgrace. It is hard, it is ludicrous that some of the busiest men in the world should be obliged to occupy their time, and that so many of my friends and well-wishers should be put to inconvenience . . . merely in order to prove to persons with an ingrained habit of self-delusion that the British Government will not give up its agents in the face of the enemy, and that the people of this country will not allow themselves to be bored into abandoning what they have spent millions of treasure and so many precious lives to attain. . . ."

He went on to express his obligation to the support given him by the Government, and especially his immediate Chief, and the advice and encouragement of friends. " I am afraid," he concluded, " if I were to refer to all my benefactors it would be like the bidding prayer. But there is one hint which I may take from the bidding prayer. Not only in this place, but at all times and in all places, I am specially bound to remember the devotion of the loyalists—the Dutch loyalists, if you please, and not only the British—of the loyalists of South Africa. . . . It seems to me that we are slowly progressing to the predestined end. . . . However long the road, it seems to me that it was the only one to the object which we were

bound to pursue, and which seems now fairly in sight. . . . What has sustained me personally on the weary road, is my absolute unshakable conviction that it was the only one which we could travel. Peace we could have had by self-effacement. We could have had it easily and comfortably on those terms. But we could not have held our own by any other methods than those which we have been obliged to adopt. I do not know whether I feel more inclined to laugh or to cry when I have to listen for the hundredth time to these dear delusions, this Utopian dogmatizing, that it only required a little more time, a little more patience, a little more meekness, a little more of all those gentle virtues of which I know I am so conspicuously devoid, in order to conciliate—to conciliate what?—panoplied hatred, insensate ambitions, invincible ignorance. I fully believe that the time is coming—Heaven knows how we desire to see it come quickly—when all the qualities of the most gentle and forbearing statesmanship which are possessed by any of our people will be called for and ought to be applied in South Africa. I do not say for a moment there is not great scope for them even to-day, but always provided that they do not mar what is essential for success in the future, the conclusiveness of the final scenes of the present drama. . . .

After paying several brief visits to friends, Lord Milner spent three days as the guest of Mr. Chamberlain at Highbury. Each day and late into the nights, he had long and important talks with his host, returning on June 3 for the Investiture at St. James's. On the 12th, by His Majesty's command, he received the South African medal next after Lord Roberts at the Medal Presentation Parade at the Horse Guards.

Diary.

June 7. . . . Usual frightful rush. After letters, went to War Office in morning, when I saw Roberts, Hanbury, and had a long talk with Brodrick. . . . Then to Colonial Office, where I saw Lord Onslow, and did a certain amount of work. At 6 p.m. went to House of Commons to see Arthur Balfour, and was unwittingly let in for an informal meeting of the House of Commons section of the Cabinet. . . . Sat up writing letters to a late hour. . . .

The gist and results of Milner's conversations with Chamberlain and the Cabinet may be summed up as follows. He represented that, if the present campaign succeeded, as Kitchener expected, in wearing down all serious opposition, the withdrawal of troops

might be begun in September. But if not, some new plan of campaign must be devised. The new plan should be that outlined by Milner in the previous autumn (*v.* Ch. IV, pp. 163 ff.) for the permanent occupation of protected districts by the Constabulary around garrisoned towns. Within such districts war might be declared at an end, absentees summoned to return under pain of heavy taxes, and acts of war treated as criminal offences. The country outside the protected areas to be scoured by mobile picked forces and the protected areas themselves extended from time to time.

Milner asked for immediate authority to spend two millions on the purchase of suitable land for settlements. The money, to be administered preferably by a Government Board, was to be raised by the new Colonies and guaranteed by Great Britain. He had already urged that rapid resettlement and reconstruction, and a swiftly flowing stream of British immigrants, were vital to the solution of the problem of establishing harmony in a white and united South Africa. The restarting of the mines, in order to provide revenue and stimulate industry, and the purchase of land for settlers combined with the revival of agriculture within the protected areas, were the most urgent preliminary steps. But besides the money required for the latter purpose, there would obviously be need of a large loan, first for making up leeway, paying the debts of the two Republics, and repatriating refugees and Boer prisoners, and next for the whole policy of development. In the end a grant in aid of the new Colonies was voted (August 6). Four millions were allotted to administrative purposes, one million to restocking the railways, and £500,000 for land purchase and settlement, a sum over the expenditure of which the High Commissioner was to have complete control (Milner Papers, LV, vi, 49–57).

The granting of a million pounds for the purchase of new rolling-stock was the outcome of Lord Milner's insistence that an immediate order for this was necessary in order to provide for the return of refugees to Johannesburg, and the more rapid opening of the mines (June 19, Milner Papers, LV, vi, 8).

With regard to the railways in the new Colonies, Milner outlined his views in a separate memorandum, with which Chamberlain expressed his complete agreement. He suggested that a loan, guaranteed by H.M. Government, should be raised to buy out existing shareholders, where the railways were not State-owned,

and that they should be worked as one concern by a Railway Board responsible to the High Commissioner. The Board to prepare an annual budget to be submitted by him for the approval of the Secretary of State, any surplus revenue being apportioned to the respective Colonies. If the self-governing Colonies and Rhodesia should presently decide to amalgamate their systems with those of the two new Colonies, as was desirable both for reasons of economy and as a step towards Federation, they could be represented on the Board of management (Milner Papers, LV, vi, 37–46).

Milner proposed to revise taxation by reducing customs duties on necessaries, substituting a small import duty on dynamite for the Kruger monopoly, reserving to the State a larger proportion than hitherto of the value of new mining concessions, and imposing a tax of 10 per cent. on the profits of the mines. He proposed that the punishment of flogging should be limited strictly to brutal crimes, and agreed that a definite statement as to an indemnity should be published on his return.

From some of his earlier letters, it will have been seen that the idea of an indemnity had long been entertained by Chamberlain. It seemed just that the cost of the war should be borne, not wholly by the British taxpayer, but in part by the Republics which had begun the war. But once they had been annexed as British Colonies, the situation was altered. The imposition of an indemnity might be regarded as taxation of the Colonies by the Mother Country. Moreover, at Middelburg the idea of taxing the burghers' farms had been definitely disavowed. The burden of an indemnity would therefore fall wholly on the British Transvaalers. Chamberlain argued that it might in equity be demanded of them, as a return for the cost of a war arising out of their grievances and for the relief of the mining industry from the impositions of the old regime. Milner agreed that such a measure was justifiable; but he was chiefly concerned with its effect upon his policy of a rapid revival of industry. He assented to fixing the contribution of the Transvaal to the cost of the war at £50,000,000, provided that administrative charges should rank prior to the interest and sinking fund on the loan to be raised for that purpose; and that part at least of any surplus revenue should be devoted to the development of the country; and, lastly, that Transvaal expenditure should not be subject to Treasury control (Milner Papers, LV, vi, 4).

Besides these conversations relating to the future administration of South Africa, Milner took part with Roberts and Brodrick in

many consultations at the War Office and the House. Since the War Office estimated that only some 17,000 Boers remained in the field in May [1] (Milner Papers, XLV, iii), the possibility of withdrawing troops and reducing the enormous cost of the war was canvassed. Kitchener proposed to weed out inefficient troops, but represented (10/7/01) that further reduction was impossible, unless some of the country was abandoned, or the situation in the Cape Colony improved. Five-sixths of the Colony south of the Orange River was still being harassed by the enemy's commandos, but the Government there might help by collecting horses, extending Martial Law, and taking better precautions to prevent the passage of arms and ammunition to the enemy (Milner Papers, XLV, iii, 12). Kitchener thought that the time had come for sterner measures against those who remained in the field. He asked (19/6/01) for permission to warn Boer leaders that their property would be confiscated if they did not come in within a month, that all prisoners of war would not be allowed to return, and that no more volunteer surrenders would be accepted (Milner Papers, XLV, iii, 89).

As to confiscation, Milner agreed in principle with making the Boers pay for the continuance of the war on the present lines. But he had always differed from Roberts as to the method of carrying it out, holding that it was justifiable " only to confiscate when you are indisputably master." He therefore proposed that only certain effectively occupied districts should be proclaimed, within which the property of owners, who did not return by a certain date, should be confiscated.[2]

Extract from Telegram. Lord Kitchener to Lord Milner.

26/6/01. [SECRET AND PERSONAL.] I fear there is little doubt the war will now go on for considerable time unless stronger measures are taken. Hope your support of my proposal . . . The extent of increasing bitterness of feeling will not in my opinion allow of return of prisoners of war without great danger of another outbreak for a very long time, under the circumstances I strongly urge sending away wives and families and settling them down elsewhere. Some such unexpected measure on our part is in my opinion essential to bring war to a rapid end. Solomon agrees with me in this. Could you let me know how Government view this matter?

[1] An underestimate, perhaps due to the fact that at any given time a large number of fighting burghers were " resting " in their farms as non-combatants.

[2] Milner to Brodrick, 12/7/01 ; Milner Papers, XLV, iii, 101.

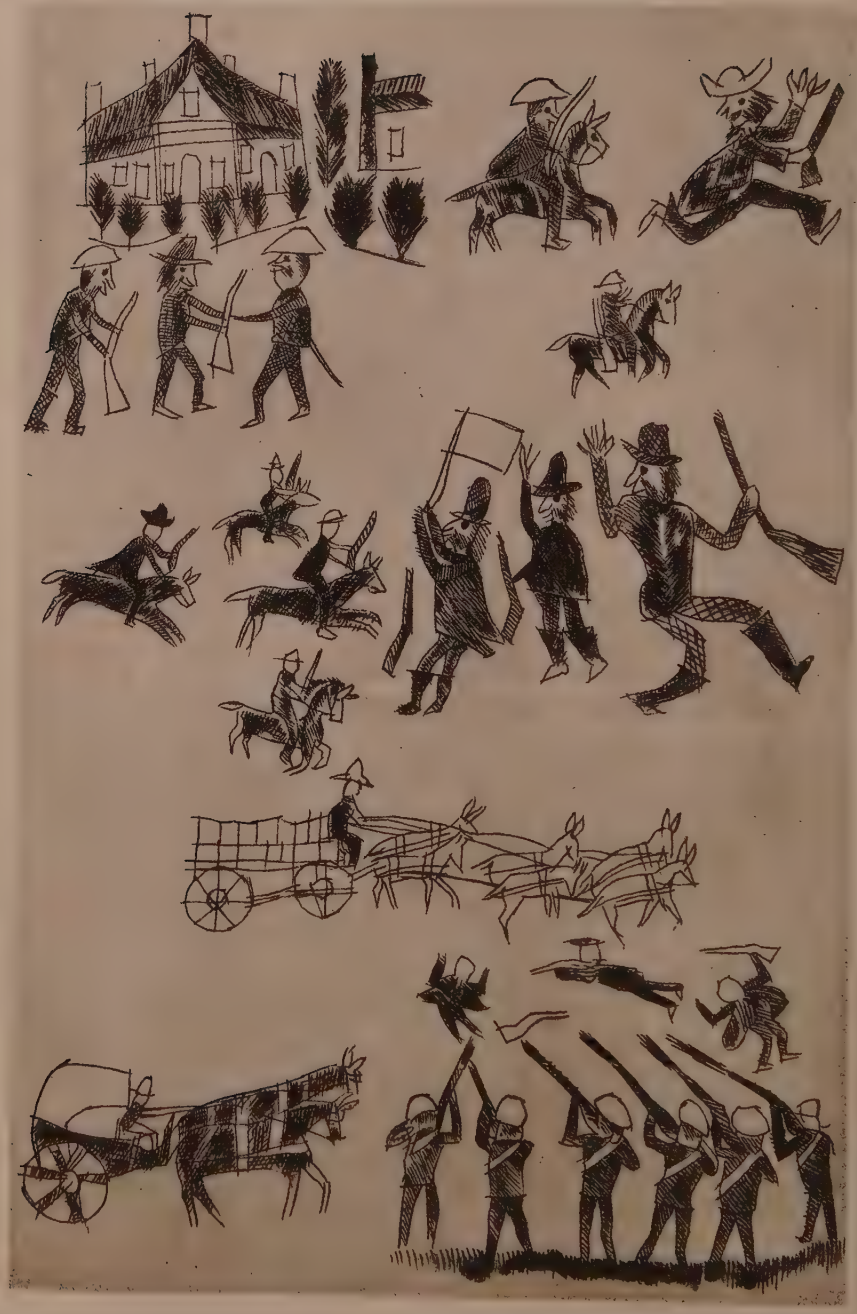
Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Lord Kitchener.

26/6/01. [SECRET AND PERSONAL] *London* . . . I do not think there is any chance of Govt. adopting proposals. Neither could I personally urge them, as I think we have bewildered the Boers by too many changes of policy in the past, and had better not make any more changes unless we feel absolutely certain that they will finish the business. I doubt myself whether anything can finish it except slowly wearing them out. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Lord Kitchener.

7/6/01. [CONFIDENTIAL] *London* . . . I think I can now sum up the situation accurately. I have seen all sorts of people, statesmen, journalists, the man in the street. I have been doing nothing else since I came but sucking in opinion. In the clubs and drawing-rooms there is the usual Babel of nonsense. The country is as *sound as a bell.* The pro-Boer ravings produce astonishingly little effect. I don't believe we have ever had a big war in which the Opposition has had less weight. Any Ministry is much more likely to fall for not conducting the war with sufficient vigour, than for persisting in it with the greatest energy at any cost. On the other hand there is a very natural impatience, not at the war not being over—people are prepared to see it drag—but at the want of clearly visible progress. What is wanted, if people are to be kept in a good humour with us—not in a rage with the Boers, which they will be any way—is definite evidence that we are nearer the end by the end of the winter. With the end of August they will want to see: More stamps at work. Some considerable district clear of the enemy. Some reduction of the force in South Africa within sight. If these symptoms that we are progressing, even slowly, are forthcoming, they will stand a lot more. If not, they will not relent towards the enemy, but they will want some of *our heads* on a charger, possibly yours, more likely mine, still more likely the Ministry's. But at present *there is not the smallest sign* of any loss of confidence in *you.* As regards negotiations, there is a general wish to see the war end without more of them. But there is no intention on the part of responsible people to go back upon what has been said. The door is still open, only it is a "Take it or leave it" sort of door. No disposition to open it any wider. My only anxiety is, lest Botha should try to parley now, just to gain time, in the months when our pressure upon him is most wearing. . . . I don't like these telegrams to Kruger.[1] . . .

[1] The Boer leaders had been permitted to consult the ex-President by cable.



DETAIL OF FRONTISPIECE.

Extract from Letter. Lord Kitchener to Lord Milner.

4/7/01. . . . We are pegging away as hard as we can, but the Boers will not stand at all. I was just starting a new system of kraaling the Boers up into areas by lines of our patent block-houses, when I got the telegram from the War Office which you no doubt saw. I have cleared out those Boers north-west of Johannesburg, and now hold a line north of Krugersdorp. It evidently does not much matter what terms we give the Boers, as De Wet and De la Rey and their following can outvote Botha and those who have had enough of it. After the recent decision to carry on the war, I do not expect there will be any serious attempt at peace again before September, unless of course the Government would take some serious steps that would upset their calculations, then of course there is no saying but we might have peace. I suppose you have done all you can about confiscation in any form, but there seems no hope of getting the Government to agree. . . . Everyone out here considers confiscation the only chance of bringing these people to their senses. Talking of chargers, I only hope my head may grace that lordly dish. I am not too enamoured of the army after 6 years' continual war, and would give a good deal to sink into oblivion and peace. . . .

In July Kitchener again represented that the time had come for bringing home to the Boers that they could not continue on the present lines with impunity, and asked Milner to support him. A strong line now would end the war.[1]

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Lord Kitchener.

25/7/01. *London.* I quite agree, and am most anxious to help you to bring utmost pressure on Boers to terminate war. Your operations have evidently hit them very hard, and now is the time to turn the screw. As regards rebels, I hope instructions of Government give you all you want.[2] . . . In the two Republics we might, I think, give notice that leaders, whom we should name, will be permanently banished from the country unless they surrender by a certain date. Impossible to deal thus with rank and file. Within districts under our control, we can insist on burghers returning to their farms by a certain date under penalty of

[1] Kitchener to Brodrick, 14/7/01 ; Kitchener to Milner, 22/7/01 (Milner Papers, XLV, iii, 129, 106).

[2] In a letter to Chamberlain, 16/7/01, Milner had urged that in the circumstances of this second rebellion, when the rebels were principally marauders and felons, the legal penalty should be enforced and rebels shot, unless there were mitigating circumstances (Milner Papers, XLI, i, 30).

confiscation, or fine amounting practically to the same thing. In such districts we can also treat all acts of war committed by individuals or small bands as criminal offences, and punish them accordingly. Above are my personal opinions. . . .

Extract from Telegram. Lord Kitchener to Lord Milner.

No date (*July*, 1901). . . . Yes, if we could adopt your suggestions regarding Orange River Colony and Transvaal, and state at the same time that these were preliminary steps, I think result would be very good. They are much shaken, and prompt action is very desirable. I would propose that first notice should indicate our intention in general terms, and not give names of leaders to be banished, but it would state that these names would be given later on.

The idea of sterner measures at this juncture had originated with the Natal Government (Cd. 732). A Proclamation was accordingly issued by Kitchener on August 7, calling upon all Boers to surrender before September 15, under pain of perpetual banishment for leaders, and a tax on the property of burghers to meet the cost of supporting their families in the Camps. The threat had little effect.

In preparation for the establishment of civil administration, and in order to deal with the scattered and petty operations in varying localities, Milner proposed to Roberts that the command in South Africa should now be subdivided into three separate commands. In the present stage, civil considerations connected with repatriation, the resumption of industrial and agricultural pursuits, and the gradual establishment of orderly government were, he argued, of equal importance with the military questions to which they were closely allied. It would therefore be essential that the several Generals should be in constant and free communication with the High Commissioner, who should have the right of calling upon them for information. Roberts communicated these suggestions to Kitchener, but explained to Milner that, until peace was declared, only the Commander-in-Chief could be in direct communication with the High Commissioner (Milner Papers, XLV, iii, 48; XXXVII, iii, 141).

Very few days of Milner's "holiday" in June and July were not filled with work and engagements, social or political. Several flying visits were paid to old friends and people of importance, Lord Salisbury, Lord Rosebery, Lord Stanley, Lord Goschen, and many others. Here are two specimen days in town.

Extract from Diary.

July 24. Breakfast with Grey and Rhodes at 22 South Street. A very good talk. Then to Marlborough House to be sworn of the Privy Council. Cromer, Rhodes, Lord Pauncefote and Lord Chesham were among the number sworn. Very busy afternoon at the Colonial Office. Dined at Hotel Cecil. About 150 of my private friends gave the entertainment, Goschen being in the Chair. Cromer was on my other side. Bath, Camperdown, E. Grey, Asquith, Brodrick were among those present. Only 3 speeches, Goschen's, mine, and Cromer's. It passed off very well. P. Gell and Birchenough walked home with me.

July 29. Came up to town in the morning with Lord Stanley. To Chambers where I did some hurried work, then to see Beit about Land Settlement. Rhodes was there. Interesting and useful talk. Got away just in time to keep an appointment at the Colonial Office with Chamberlain. After doing work, lunched with him at Athenæum. Back to office, where I saw Lambert and Camperdown.

Rhodes's views may be gathered from the following letter, written a couple of months before.

Extract from Letter. Cecil Rhodes to Sir A. Milner.

The Sanatorium, Kimberley. 13/5/01. . . . I am going up to Rhodesia for a month and hope to leave on 3rd July for England. . . . I would like to talk with you, there are several big questions. No. 1, to buy 1,000 farms on High Plateau in Transvaal and put our own people on and try and get Beit and others to do it ; (2) to talk the future with you *qua* Federation ; (3) to talk the personal matter with you that may affect the world. My health has been better here, but there is no doubt my heart is dicky and has given me more trouble the last bout than ever before, so you like to put your house in order. Do not think I am despondent, for I think I am much better, but the secret of life is to face everything. I am glad you will do your best over Barotseland. Is it not ridiculous ; I have done everything in an almost impossible case and saved them the keys of Africa, I want nothing but the means for administration and development. . . . They look on me at the Colonial Office with the most absolute terror. I can see their faces of relief when the telegram, I should say cable, reaches them that I have departed from this mortal life. I sometimes wonder whether the spirit of our ancestors has departed. I think not, it is only the ruling crowd and that the people are all right. . . .

Extract from Letter. Edmund Garrett [1] *to Lord Milner.*

4/6/01. . . . Ave Cæsar ! You will know why I could not be strewing palms with the man in the street. . . . I feel I must see your face again. . . . I too have had a time, and a time and a devil of a time. I find the chief ingredients of life are two : (1) the sense of active *efficiency* in work ; (2) Friends, comradeship, love. Since 1 is now lost, one gets the more grateful for 2 ; which has turned up such trumps, too. I appreciate *you* particularly, not being unaware that your friends include everybody worth having. It means a pleasant embarrassment at times like these. . . .

About this time Milner made the acquaintance of M. Clemenceau. The acquaintanceship subsequently ripened into a friendship which was to prove of inestimable service in the Great War.

One of the objects which Lord Milner had set before him in applying for leave had been to obtain for his policy the support of moderate members of the Opposition, the Liberal Imperialist section led by Rosebery, Haldane, Asquith, and Sir E. Grey. Those " interesting talks " with Rhodes and Beit on Land Settlement were therefore interspersed with conversations with the Liberal Imperialist Leaders. Their attitude is made plain by the following letters.

Extract from Letter. Sir Edward Grey (Viscount Grey of Fallodon) to Lord Milner.

24/5/01. . . . It seems to me that four main points in the South African question are absolutely secure, as far as Parliament is concerned. (i) The prosecution of the war to a successful end. (ii) The annexation of the Boer territories. (iii) The establishment of direct Imperial Administration for a time, with a view to eventual representative Colonial Government, when the country has filled up and settled down. (iv) Your own position as the Administrator. Not one of these has been challenged by any vote in the House since the last Election, and when any of them is challenged (as may happen after Morley's speech last night) the Government will be supported by a considerable number of the Liberal party. And if by any miracle the Government was beaten on some different issue, no Government could be formed, which was not clear and strong on all these points. . . . Probably your return

[1] Formerly Editor of the *Cape Times*. See Sir E. T. Cook's " Life of E. G. Garrett."

will produce some further attacks in the *Daily News* [1] and some from individual pro-Boers. . . . I don't think they really matter. . . . It is horrible that we have been let in for such an enormous expenditure of life and money to prevent our losing South Africa, but it seems to me that you personally have come through it all in a way, which puts you now in a position of wonderful influence and reputation, and of this I am very glad. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Haldane.

1/7/01. . . . There is an ingenious suggestion much fostered in some quarters, and to my mind *most dangerous*, that the Liberal split should be patched up by both sides agreeing, *not to differ* on the South African question, *but to unite on a middle or compromise policy*—some half-way house between Imperialism and pro-Boerism. . . . The bargain could only be that the pro-Boer, having agreed to " chuck " independence, should be compensated by the support of a united party in attacking the Government whenever necessity compelled it to run counter to any humanitarian or constitutional fad. Refugee Camps . . . would be one subject of attack ; the impending breakdown of constitutional machinery would certainly be another. . . . These are only instances. My point is that, whilst I have no wish to hinder or in any way interfere with Liberal reunion, I am compelled, in the national interest, to put any little obstacle I can to the achievement of reunion by a compromise which would hamper and might ruin the course of the national policy in South Africa. Why do I write all this to you ? Because I believe, on the big questions, we are remarkably agreed. You said a thing in one of your letters which impressed me greatly, because it just stated what I feel intensely, and what haunts me all the time, i.e., the future of the country and its position in the world (this was the substance, I am not quoting your words) is at stake, not only in South Africa. We have to fight hard for our position among the nations, not only with arms. A great effort is required all round, and *great seriousness*. We cannot afford, as we have been able to afford, when we had the field all to ourselves, to play with these big external problems. And *it is playing*, to make a serious decision in Imperial politics depend upon a matter of party tactics. . . .

One word in conclusion, though I think to *any of you* it is unnecessary. Not only from policy, but from conviction, I shall

[1] This prophecy was amply fulfilled. The *Daily News* had been sold to a pro-Boer syndicate in December, 1900, whereupon Sir E. T. Cook resigned, and Mr. J. Saxon Mills, a member of his staff and a staunch Imperialist, became Editor of the *Cape Times*.

always strive as I have striven, to avoid anything which could shock Liberal feeling in the true sense of the word. I claim to be myself, at bottom, a Liberal. My "Imperialism" is too Liberal, too advanced, to be understood to-day. If measures, apparently harsh, are adopted, with my approval *or without my protest*, it is because I think them inevitable. And on the other hand I could show any amount of curative and creative work, and it is only the long drag of the guerilla war which prevents the foundations already laid from being visible, [or] only just visible, above the subsiding waters. But if we are to build up anything in South Africa, we *must disregard* and absolutely disregard the screamers. All this about South Africa, because that is the corner I know and where I can help. But don't suppose that I care for it *supremely for itself*. I care for it because of the vital importance of a real and permanent success there to the whole future of the nation, alike in its position in the world, and in its internal development. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Haldane to Lord Milner.

6/7/01. . . . I have taken a day or two before answering your letter, not because I had any doubt as to what to write, but because I wanted to show your letter to Asquith and Grey. They have both read it. I do not think that we had not realized what you put before us. But the seriousness of it is emphasized by the way you state it. We all feel that. We know that we may have huge difficulties in getting the average Liberal to take the view which you put, and which we emphatically (we are all at one about this) share. You are right in thinking that there is danger. We may not be able to carry the bulk of our people. But I do think that we can carry enough of them to paralyse the energies of the rest for mischief. If the Government will stand firm, and above all give tactful explanations of their reasons for action, I think we can manage to help them. . . . Anyhow I entirely share your view as to the madness of a Compromise policy. Whatever the result of this split, I do not think you need fear *that* with Grey and Asquith. Grey is like a rock, and Asquith's insight is so great that, now that he is free and responsible for directing his own group, he is an unlikely person to lose sight of what is the real great objective—that which is beyond and above even the African question that is its expression for the moment. I do not think that the British Empire was ever in a more critical position than for several years it has been and still is, or in one from which it was more easy to deliver it by resolute action. But resolute, clear action is what is wanted. . . . I think that so far as Liberals are

concerned, it is Asquith and Grey that you will have to deal with. Rosebery is probably out of it all now. Yours always gratefully, R. B. HALDANE. I wrote "gratefully" because I think you of all men realize the one way of salvation for the Empire.

On July 23 Milner was presented with the Freedom of the City of London at the Guildhall; "one of the greatest, as it is one of the most coveted, distinctions that can be bestowed upon any public servant," he described it, in returning thanks to the Lord Mayor (Mr. Frank Green). After commenting on the almost phenomenal steadfastness and agreement of the great body of the nation upon the South African question, he remarked that: "The old illusion, so sedulously fostered and at one time so dangerous, that the war was due to the intrigues of capitalists, or to any personal or petty cause, is now virtually extinct. The great national issue at the bottom of it is, I believe, now recognized by the vast majority of thinking men. It may not even now be as clear as it will be in the pages of history, but for all practical purposes it is evident already,—and that issue having once been clearly raised, there is virtually no difference as to the answer which, at whatever cost, must be given. Deep and universal as is the longing for peace, anxious as we all are to make submission easy to every honourable enemy, there are few, I think, few indeed, who would be willing to purchase peace by any concessions that might compromise the future,—or to run the risk of popularizing rebellion by treating repeated, deliberate, and crime-stained treason as a venial offence. There is surely an immense difference, morally speaking, between those stout old burghers who still adhere to their original leaders in the ex-Republics, and the roving ruffians—British subjects, if you please—who are harrying their fellow British subjects in our own Colonies. But side by side with the general determination to bring this struggle to an honourable and conclusive close there is, if I do not greatly misread the minds of my fellow-countrymen, a no less general resolve to treat the burghers of the two late Republics when the war is over with such fairness, and even with such generosity—as will help them to accept the position, and, in the long run, to acquire the sentiments of British citizenship. We must show them—we shall show them—in the noble words of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, that, if they have lost their independence, they have not lost their freedom. . . . And last, but not least, there is the general recognition—which at one time was certainly far from being strong enough—of the true character and of the splendid devotion to the Empire

of the South African loyalists, of their importance to us, and of our duty to them. Let us beware in trying to win—as I believe we shall win—the hearts of our former enemies, lest we alienate the confidence of those who have all along been our friends. The problem is not an insoluble one, but its great complexity ought always to be borne in mind, and it ought to make us cautious with regard to the constitutional problem in the two new States and in the ultimate South African Federation. For my own part, I have great confidence in the efficacy of impartial and incorruptible government, of a bold development of the vast natural resources of the country, and of the gradual and prudent introduction of self-governing institutions to heal old sores, to create new interests, and gradually to bring divers sections of the people to co-operate for the good of their common country. . . ."

Before his leave expired, Lord Milner was satisfied to some extent with the effect of his representations. But he became more deeply convinced than ever of the unsatisfactory nature of Party Government as an instrument for conducting the affairs of a great Empire. For the Empire, as he visualized it, was not a " possession " of Great Britain, but a union of free nations, whose business ought to be administered for the benefit of the whole by an Imperial Council.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir Clinton Dawkins.

28/7/01. . . . My time has been in one way a profitable one. Though I have had no " holiday," I have freshened up a lot of old acquaintances of the better kind, and have I believe done both the Government and the saner portion of the Opposition a lot of good. Asquith and Grey's stand has been fine, and must, I believe, produce a good effect in the long run. All this is encouraging, and, though the military continue to prove their complete incompetence in S. Africa, I think we have now sufficient way on the ship to carry her well into port in spite of persistent bungling. But that does not alter my views of the total and ridiculous breakdown of our system, military, administrative, constitutional. We have got through a moderate-sized crisis, but we should never get through a big one in this condition, with such Departments and with the ultimate decision on great external questions resting with an Assembly so totally incompetent to deal with them as the House of Commons, or an effete octopus like the Treasury. My determination, therefore, is strengthened, to get out of harness as soon as I honourably can. I disbelieve too entirely in the hierarchy of which I am a member to stay in it longer than I need. But that does not make me any more desirous to put on another

harness. . . . [On these grounds he rejected Dawkins' proposal that he might join the firm of Morgan, with the idea that he might be able to retire with a competence before long and devote himself to championing those causes of National Service and Imperial Federation which they both had at heart.]

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to (Sir) George Parkin.

13/9/01. . . . It is quite true, as you say, that my reception at Home was most encouraging and delightful, not so much the formal honours and receptions—though I do not undervalue them—as the unmistakable evidence of support and good-will from the mass of the people. I am strongly impressed by two things : *one*, that the heart of the nation is sound, as I believe is also that of the British Colonials everywhere, and, *secondly*, that our Constitution and methods are antiquated and bad, and the real sound feeling of the nation does not get a chance of making itself effective. I would rather not say what I think of the House of Commons as an Imperial Council or of the effect of our wretched Party system on national affairs. The experience of life has been to confirm extraordinarily my belief in the doctrine which we both held and preached theoretically as young men. Only I am more radical and revolutionary than I then was, and less inclined to trust in the growth of Federal Union from small beginnings.

The existing Parliaments, whether British or Colonial, are too small, and so are the Statesmen they produce (except in accidental cases like Chamberlain) for such big issues. Until we get a real Imperial Council, not merely a Consultative, but first a Constitutional, and then an Executive Council with control of all our *world business*, we shall get nothing. Look at the way in which the splendid opportunities for federal defence which this war afforded have been thrown away. I believe it will come about, but at present I do not see the man to do it. Both you and I could help him enormously, almost decisively indeed, for I have, and doubtless you have, an amount of illustration and argument to bring to bear on the subject, *drawn from practical experience*, which would logically smash the opposition. Our difficulty in old days was that we were advocating a grand, but as it seemed an impracticable, idea. I should advocate the same thing to-day as an urgent practical necessity. But a head is wanted for the show, which for obvious reasons neither you nor I can be, and I do not see him anywhere. The men of influence are either too old, too timid, or too infected with *local* partisanship, and unable to get away from the schemes of *local* party victory. Moreover they are *all* too unused to think seriously and continually of [such] a

subject as the present one. "It will come about some way somehow" is the most advanced idea any of them have. "Everything comes to him who waits." Now as a matter of fact nothing ever comes except opportunity. If you neglect to use it, what then? We have neglected a grand opportunity just now. Not that the co-operation of different parts of the Empire in the South African struggle has not had its value. It has. And I quite agree with you for giving us a French-Canadian Premier in Canada at this juncture. But we cannot rely *permanently* upon casual inorganization, and more or less sentimental outbursts of national sympathy as a basis of Empire. They are but raw material out of which statesmanship can, and should, make a great fabric. The material is there: where are the workmen? For my own part I am tied and bound for some years at any rate, the object of which you no doubt fully estimate the magnitude, but of which no man without intimate knowledge can appreciate all the perplexities. As regards the use of the Dutch language to which you refer, I am in exact agreement with every word you say. But I do not regard the language question as one of our greatest difficulties, though it certainly requires careful handling. My idea is that the formula, "The presumption must always be in favour of English, with permissive Dutch where practical convenience demands it," will take us a long way. I have no idea whatever to admit *equality* of languages, and I hope there will be little trouble in making English the language of the Courts, Schools, and Parliament, but always with a tolerance of Dutch where necessary as long as necessary. Proscription of Dutch would, I feel confident, defeat its own end. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir Herbert Warren (President of Magdalen College, Oxford) to Lord Milner.

25/7/01. . . . Let me say, if it is the smallest aid and heartening to you, that you go back with a confidence as I believe on the part of all your friends not more perfect, that would be impossible, but more active, more at white heat than ever. . . .

CHAPTER VIII

Developments at the Cape and in the New Colonies

Aug.–Dec., 1901

Martial Law and "Suspension"

AFTER a fortnight of "fearfully rushy days," interspersed with several short visits to friends and a series of farewell dinner-parties, Lord Milner sailed for South Africa on August 10. The voyage was occupied in clearing up arrears of work and correspondence. Sandow exercises were taken for recreation. Morley's "Cromwell," and E. B. Browning's "Sonnets from the Portuguese" are the only literary relaxations mentioned in the *Diary*. Milner's arrival at Cape Town was greeted by a very remarkable display of enthusiasm. All the way from the Docks to Greenmarket Square, spontaneous outbursts of cheering broke from the crowds, as he drove to a Mayoral reception, and thence to Government House, where he was the guest of the new Governor.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

28/8/01. . . . My welcome here yesterday was really extraordinary—frantic. I don't over-estimate such things, but it would be dullness not to notice, and affectation to pretend not to be pleased by them. Of course, I feel it is rather ill-omened to be greeted with such a shout on *entering* the arena. Miracles are expected of me, which I cannot possibly perform. The result cannot be equal to the anticipation. . . .

In a long memorandum addressed to the Secretary of State, the High Commissioner reviewed the situation in Cape Town as he found it on his return. In spite of the excellent effect of the visit of the Duke and Duchess of York[1] during his absence, he was aware of an atmosphere of depression. The prolongation of the war was producing that feeling of despondency and impatience

[1] King George V and Queen Mary.

which it was intended to create. This feeling was intensified by resentment at the continuance of Martial Law. There was, indeed, much room for criticism in the administration of it. Misapplications of it were due largely to the want of one supreme military authority within the Colony in constant touch with Governor and Ministers. For, outside the jurisdiction of General Wynne, who was himself subject to instructions from the Commander-in-Chief, Martial Law administered by moving columns occupied in chasing enemy commandos led to confusion. There was a tendency, too, to extend to such districts the process of "clearing the country," which had been put into operation in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, and which the High Commissioner thought would be disastrous if applied to the Cape Colony. "In order to be successful as a military measure, such devastation must be complete, and to completely devastate the Colony is, firstly, impossible, and secondly, if possible, would be the greatest military and political blunder which we could commit. Apart from its after-effects, it would, in my opinion, tend to prolong, and not to shorten, the war. Moreover, even from the military point of view, the mobility of the chasing columns was greatly impaired by their loading themselves up with quantities of cattle, sheep, waggons and miscellaneous articles." He returned to his argument that the system of local defence by Colonial troops should be developed, so as to render certain districts capable of protecting themselves without the aid of Imperial troops, and thus avoid the unpleasant consequences which tended to alienate even loyal farmers (Milner Papers, LV, vi, 60–7).

It was to a large extent experience of the working of Martial Law, thus haphazardly administered, which prompted the opposition of Ministers to the extension of it to the ports, demanded by Kitchener. Milner fully recognized that "Martial Law is, at present, an absolute necessity throughout the greater part of the Colony, and would be a great advantage in every part." [1] He was anxious to do everything to mitigate its severity and to systematize its administration, but, he wrote, "deplorable as the condition of many of the country districts is, it would have been infinitely worse, and the rebellion certainly far more serious, if the secret traitors and fomentors of sedition . . . were allowed freedom of movement, of speech, and of writing. . . ."

With regard to Martial Law, his position had always been that

[1] Memorandum to Chamberlain, 20/9/01 ; Milner Papers, LV, vi, 58–68.

he detested it, " not because it is a severe law, but because it is no law at all," arbitrary and indefinite. In its place he desired to see a Peace Preservation Act, providing the necessary, but well-defined interference with the ordinary liberties of the subject demanded by exceptional circumstances. But since it was impossible to procure legislation to that effect in the Cape Colony, and a meeting of Parliament would only aggravate all the existing evils, he agreed with Hely-Hutchinson that the only possible course was to make the best of Kitchener's reasonable demand for an extension of Martial Law, by a compromise which would enable the military authorities to deal with the sedition, treasonable correspondence, and passing of munitions of war at the Cape and other ports, whilst leaving the ordinary liberties of the subject intact. Martial Law, used for such purposes, had existed in Natal since the beginning of the war, and caused no friction, nor would one loyal person in a thousand object to it. Kitchener consented, promising his formal assurance that the extension of Martial Law should only be used for these definite purposes. Sir Gordon Sprigg and his Ministers, however, absolutely rejected the proposed compromise, apparently holding that exceptional measures were not necessary. But that position was clearly not tenable in the face of the Commander-in-Chief's conviction that such necessity existed. Milner hoped that an understanding would be reached by a conference between the General and the Prime Minister ; and arranged with Sprigg to meet him at Johannesburg. This arrangement was upset by a telegram from Kitchener, in which, regarding the refusal of Ministers to accept the proposed compromise as final, he used (Sept. 15) terms which Ministers interpreted and resented as a threat. A very awkward position was created. For there was no alternative Ministry possible, nor, as we have seen, would Chamberlain entertain the idea of suspending the Constitution. The irritation of Ministers, however, was presently allayed.

At Chamberlain's suggestion, Sir Gordon and other Ministers conferred with Milner and Kitchener. A stormy meeting was followed by a more amicable one at Pretoria, when agreement was reached. Martial Law of the limited kind desired was proclaimed over the Ports districts on October 9. Complaints arising from its administration in the Colony were henceforth to be considered by a Board of three, which did very excellent work under the Presidency of Sir Lewis Michell (Milner Papers, XLI, ii ; LV, vi). Ministers, on the other hand, agreed to be responsible

for the cost of certain Colonial Corps which had hitherto been partly defrayed by the War Office.[1]

Thus the systematic defence of the Colony by its own troops, which Milner had been urging since before the war, at last came into being. In December, Sir Gordon was able to state with justifiable pride that the Cape Government had taken over the defence of certain districts, and now controlled a defensive force of 18,000 town guards, whilst 18,000 loyalists were fighting in the field.[2]

One reason which weighed with some Ministers against the extension of Martial Law was, that they objected to the Seat of Government being placed under military authority. That, they thought, would soon render inevitable the suspension of the Constitution, to which Sir Gordon was resolutely opposed. Loyalists, however, were becoming increasingly in favour of suspension. But opinion was divided as to whether a formal suspension was desirable. Many were inclined to agree with Milner and Hely-Hutchinson that the best course in the circumstances would be to carry on the Government in breach of the Constitution, by postponing the meeting of Parliament, as Sprigg had in fact been doing ; and thus allow the constitution to suspend itself.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Haldane.

17/7/01. . . . " All I contend for is that we should fearlessly go on governing without Parliamentary authority, as long as the meeting of Parliament is at all likely to lead to a prolongation of the war or fresh disturbances. We cannot afford to repeat the scandals of the Session of 1900."

Sprigg now wished Parliament to meet in October, feeling confident that he would command a majority. No one else, however, thought so. Rhodes was the only possible alternative as Prime Minister. He refused to serve under Sprigg, and Sprigg refused to serve under him. Rhodes did not share Sprigg's passion for the Premiership. " But," so he wrote to the Governor, " if you tell me that you must have me, I'll take it, and pull the Colony through." His scheme in that case, was to continue governing the Colony without Parliament, until he was sure of a good majority. He would then, on the new Register, fill the places rendered vacant by members who had sided with the Boers ; summon Parliament,

[1] On the whole subject of Martial Law in South Africa, see Cd. 981.
[2] Cd. 903, pp. 112–16, 138, 165.

obtain an indemnity, and pass a bill providing for an automatic increase of seats, on application to the Supreme Court, in proportion to the increase of inhabitants.[1] At length Ministers abandoned the idea of meeting Parliament in October and gave their reasons in a remarkable Minute (Cd. 903, pp. 57–64, 87–9). The course ultimately followed, after appeals for suspension of the Constitution by the Home Government had been rejected, was to prorogue Parliament from time to time, the necessary expenditure being met by Governor's warrants, to be legalized by an act of indemnity after peace was declared (Cd. 903 ; *v.* Ch. XI).

Lord Milner in the New Colonies

On September 2, the High Commissioner had sailed in H.M.S. *Gibraltar* for East London. Thence he proceeded with his Staff to Bloemfontein. This route was taken at the instance of the G.O.C. For the military situation in the Colony was serious. When a third invasion had been attempted in June, Kitchener had sent troops to help Haig, and placed French in command of operations. Now the advance of strong commandos in the direction of Malmesbury gave occasion for fearing a general rising. Bluejackets were landed at Lambert's Bay (Oct. 4), but Kitchener refused to divert any more troops from his main objective (Milner Papers, XX, ii, 81, 114, 122).

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mrs. Montefiore.

Johannesburg. 11/9/01. . . . I send you a hurried line, on this odd scrap of paper, just to report our safe arrival at this place, which happened yesterday. We had had rather an adventurous journey, as the Colony is so disturbed, and I have had five days very hard work at Cape Town and Bloemfontein each. The state of the country is horrible, death and devastation everywhere, as the continuance of this wretched and senseless guerilla warfare has forced the military to sweep the country from end to end. The Orange River Colony is virtually a desert, almost the whole population living in refugee camps along the railway line. At a liberal computation *there are not more than* 6,000 *Boers* [2] still in arms against us. They are ill mounted, ill clad, ill armed, the most wretched

[1] July 3 and 10, Milner Papers, XX, ii, 95–9. The existing register, which would expire in 1903, contained the names of over 10,000 rebels, and did not include persons who had acquired the necessary qualifications since the last registration.

[2] *v.* Ch. IX, end.

objects conceivable, and constantly on the run. Still they keep on, deluded by the persistent lying of their leaders, and it may take a long time yet to catch them, in twenties and thirties. It is a miserable business. . . .

The five days at Bloemfontein were spent in interviews with members of the new Administration and making arrangements for land settlement in the Orange River Colony. Under an Agricultural Department, formed in July, afforestation had already been begun. The institution of a Land Board was now discussed, which presently made preparations for repatriation of Boer prisoners and refugees, and acquired land suitable for settlement. Before peace was declared, 150 British settlers had been installed in farms (Cd. 1163, pp. 95–9). The progress of the Colony is described in despatches from the Deputy Administrator (Sir H. Goold-Adams, May 4, Sept. 27, Cd. 903, pp. 96–112 ; and May 27/02, Cd. 1163, pp. 144–54).

The financial position was shown to be strong and promising. Although deprived of its principal source of revenue, the railways, and although it had to spend £112,000 on Refugee Camps, and nearly £50,000 for Provisional Mounted Police, the Colony could show a balance of over £34,000 for the period of March 13, 1900–June 30, 1901.

From Bloemfontein, Lord Milner proceeded to the Transvaal, where he took up his residence at Johannesburg. Sunnyside, the house which he now occupied in the present suburb of Parkston, commanded a beautiful view in which he delighted. It looked out " over miles of rolling veldt to the great mountain barrier of the Magaliesberg on the northern horizon, with the two forts of Pretoria, little specks in the far distance, just in front of it." . . . So he described it in a letter to Mrs. Montefiore. This was the view from a window of the little study which was to be the scene of his labours until he left South Africa. " I always like a north aspect in these regions," he added, " because it looks towards the sun and towards Home."

From Johannesburg he frequently visited Pretoria, consulting and meeting Kitchener and Lagden and the other Heads of Departments there, or presiding at meetings of the Executive Council. A direct telephone wire was installed between Pretoria and Johannesburg in September, and is noted in the *Diary* as " a great boon."

The High Commissioner's choice of Johannesburg for his private residence prompted the leading inhabitants of Pretoria to present

a memorial in which they submitted reasons for retaining Pretoria as the capital of the Transvaal. Milner replied (Oct. 2), that the time was hardly ripe for a decision. Ultimately the people themselves would have to decide. But for the present there were many reasons of practical convenience, and even necessity, for adopting the present arrangement. Only those departments for which there was no room in the public offices at Pretoria were located at Johannesburg. Communication was easy. Subsequently he formulated his views more definitely in a letter to Chamberlain (21/12/01), after the latter had raised the question (27/11/01). The argument of convenience and experience, he suggested, pointed irresistibly to Johannesburg as the centre for the Post Office, Mining and Native Departments, as well as the headquarters of Railway Administration. He proposed to continue the present arrangement rather than prejudice the future decision of the people by building offices for them at Pretoria (XLIV, ii, 94). In his opinion neither the climate nor the tradition of Pretoria gave it any special fitness for a capital. On the other hand, the temporary residence of the High Commissioner enabled him to keep his hand upon the pulse of the great dominant industrial centre. The insinuation that, if the whole personnel of the Government were not transferred to Pretoria, it would be due to the influence of the " capitalists," was one which both H.M. Government and the High Commissioner could afford to ignore (Milner Papers, XLIV, ii, 94).

Chamberlain reverted to the subject in the following April, objecting to an indefinite prolongation of a system which set up " practically a second seat of Government." It was essential, he maintained, that the records should be kept in one place by the Secretary of the Administration as the Chief Permanent Official, and that the departments of the Legal Adviser and Controller of the Treasury should not be at a distance from the Administrator. The location of those departments was prejudged by the existence of Government buildings at Pretoria. In favour of concentrating the Administration at Pretoria, was the political consideration that it was not desirable to expose the members of it to the influence of a mining town such as Johannesburg. Chamberlain explained that his conclusions were based on the long experience of the Crown Colonies.[1] Milner's manuscript comment upon this remark is illuminating as to his attitude with regard to the government of the new Colonies: " To try to cram the administration of the

[1] Cd. 1163.

Transvaal into a Crown Colony mould would in my opinion be a capital error, administrative and political. I feel so strongly on this subject, that, if such a course is to be insisted on, the execution of it must be left to other hands than mine."[1]

Milner soon gave proof that his judgment was not to be unduly influenced by the mining interests. The question of the municipal boundaries of Johannesburg was raised at the end of September. The case for the Municipality was stated by the Acting Town Clerk, Mr. Lionel Curtis. The future development of the town, it was urged, as well as the administrative needs of the Reef, required the inclusion of the Rand within one administrative area. The Chamber of Mines replied that conflict between mines and town would then inevitably be provoked, and demanded that no portion of the mining area should be included within the town limits. Neither the general interest nor the particular interest of the Town Council would be harmed by such exclusion (Milner Papers, XLIV, ii, 22–59).

Milner gave his reasons for deciding otherwise.

Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

25/10/01. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . In my opinion, and that of all the members of the future Executive Council of the Transvaal, the policy advocated by the Chamber of Mines is an impossible one. . . . The substantial arguments for unification appear to me overwhelming. . . . The existing absolute cleavage between the town and mining area . . . cannot fail to cause the most serious administrative difficulties. The great municipal questions must be common to both. Separate systems of sanitation, lighting, and public health, would lead to continual friction, waste, and inefficiency. And apart from its administrative inconvenience, the separation would also be socially and politically most undesirable. The white workmen, who reside in the mining area, though they may be a comparatively small portion of the white working population of the town and neighbourhood, are, by virtue of their industrial skill and high rate of remuneration, a very important element, and, *nota bene*, an almost purely British one. To exclude them from citizenship of the Municipality (even if they were to acquiesce in such an arrangement) would be equally bad for them and for the rest of the town. Moreover, the separation of town and mining area would accentuate and bring to a head the latent antagonism between the mining industry, with its

[1] Milner Papers, XLIV, iii, 100. For the solution of this question, *v.* Ch. XII, p. 446.

endless ramifications, on the one hand, and the commercial and industrial interests, not directly concerned with mining, on the other. The Town Council, if the mining area were wholly excluded from its jurisdiction, would inevitably become the exponent of the latter section, and would be likely, *ab initio*, to adopt an attitude more or less hostile to the mines, while the best heads among the mining men, who should be among the leaders of the combined community, town and mines, would be tempted to confine their interests and energy to their special business alone. The interests of the community as a whole would suffer, for the gigantic problems which lie before the Municipal Authorities of this district—water supply,[1] sanitation, the improvement of the means of communication, &c.—and upon the satisfactory solution of which the welfare, not of this district alone, but of the whole Colony, largely depends, require the cordial co-operation of the ablest citizens, whether mining men, commercial men, or professional men. Any antagonism of interests is much more likely to be reconciled, if the representatives of the different sections, who, after all, have much in common, are compelled to work together in a single body, membership of which will be, beyond all question, a position of importance and distinction. . . .

Milner was now more than ever anxious to start the work of reconstruction. Both from the economic and political standpoint, he thought it was highly desirable to set the wheels of industry in motion again. Great, too, would be the moral effect upon the Boers, when they saw both their enemies and their former comrades returning to normal conduct of business. Purely from the military point of view, therefore, he deemed it the best policy to hasten the return of refugees and the working of the Rand. But with this, Kitchener, intent on monopolizing transport and supplies for his columns, still did not agree.

Milner, as he became increasingly aware of the muddle and confusion caused by the present administration of the Transvaal, grew more and more determined that it should not last, and chafed at the obstacles placed in the way of reconstruction by the military authorities. "There is a little, a very little, quickening in the process of resettlement," he wrote impatiently to a friend in October. "After prolonged controversy I have succeeded in softening the stony heart of K. to the point of allowing the refugees to return in regular batches at a somewhat improved pace. . . ."

[1] About this time Milner appointed a Commission to inquire into the Witwatersrand water supply. Its report (Feb., 1902) was printed at Pretoria.

And again, a fortnight later (23/10/01) : "We are doing nothing. At the present moment, with all my efforts, only 500 stamps are at work in the mines out of a possible 6,000. Five-sixths of our people are still at the coast. The country is a wilderness, without inhabitants and almost without cultivation. Everything is at famine prices, and will be worse. You ask, why allow it to be so? and you may well ask. There is the *crux* of the business. Personally I have always thought, I think more strongly than ever, that we pay too much attention to the enemy, and too little to settling the country. If we would just make up our minds that the war will not be over—is going on, in a sort of fashion, for years—but *that it no longer greatly matters*, to the extent of paralysing all industry and enterprise, then we should really begin to turn the corner, and sooner or later I trust that enlightenment may come, in the only quarter where it is important, viz. Pretoria. . . ."

Yet, in fact, he was very far from "doing nothing." A remarkable series of despatches in November and December and January summarized what was being done and what, with broad statesmanlike vision, Milner contemplated doing.

Progress was made with education. Irene, a big Refugee Camp, twenty miles from Pretoria, was the Educational headquarters, from whence lady teachers were sent out into the Dutch villages. These teachers had come from England, Canada, and Australia, in gallant response to an appeal. But they had to face a Dutch public, hostile to teachers who could not speak their language. In the end, failure had to be recognized. Teachers were brought from Natal and the Cape Colony, and teaching was carried on in the *taal* ; English, in these districts, being practically eschewed. As to religious instruction, in reply to inquiries from home whether any help was being given or intended to be given to voluntary schools, Milner, after consulting Mr. Sargant, replied :

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

29/9/02. . . . No help is being given to Voluntary Schools. I think it would be a great mistake to admit that principle. If once we began it I do not know where we should stop, and the National system, which we are trying to establish, and which, if successful, will do more than anything else to fuse the discordant elements of this community into one people, would be defeated by competing systems of Voluntary Schools, especially as they must inevitably be run on race lines. If different English denominations had their own schools, the Dutch Reformed Church would cer-

tainly run its schools everywhere—they will certainly do that to some extent in any case—and education would thus become a means of perpetuating, rather than obliterating, race distinctions. At the same time we are desirous, in every reasonable way, to conciliate all denominations and to disarm, as far as possible, the hostility which, if repelled by us, they might manifest towards the National system of education. Mr. Sargant has, therefore, and wisely as I think, adopted the New South Wales principle of allowing the representatives of different religious denominations to give special religious instruction to the pupils of their various creeds during the hours set apart for religious instruction. I am not sure that many will avail themselves of this, most parents being satisfied with the undenominational Bible teaching, which is given by the school staffs. But the fact that it is optional to have the children instructed in religion by the clergymen of their various creeds is calculated to disarm a certain amount of opposition. . . .

Whilst in England, Milner had suggested that the subject of irrigation should be studied forthwith, and that Mr. Willcocks [1] should be invited to come to South Africa for that purpose (Milner Papers, LV, vi, 4). Mr. Willcocks completed a notable report in November (Cd. 1163, pp. 37–75). This report, together with that of the Land Settlement Commission (Cd. 626), pointed the way to the political and economic development of the country, which Milner inaugurated. Improved methods of agriculture [2] and stock raising were to go hand-in-hand with the education of farmers and the distribution of new settlers. As a step towards the first of these objects, Milner arranged for selected prisoners of war to be taken on tours in Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The report of the Land Settlement Commission stated plainly enough that all the vast expenditure in blood and treasure upon the war might prove to have been in vain, unless some strenuous effort were made to secure the settlement of a British population large enough to make a recurrence of danger and disorder impossible.

"Absolutely everything depends," Milner wrote in a memorandum to the Home Government (8/11/01), "upon starting the new self-governing Confederation with a British-minded majority. We must wait for Federation and self-government until that

[1] Sir William Willcocks, K.C.M.G., had recently projected and designed the Assouan Dam (1898).

[2] The backward state of agriculture in many parts, with suggestions for future development, were described at this time by Mr. C. Bleloch (1901) in "The New South Africa."

majority is assured. Otherwise, we may have a repetition, on a vast scale, of our deplorable experiences in the Cape Colony." The statistical outlook, from this point of view, he estimated as follows. At the end of the war there would be a total white population of 940,000 composed of 496,000 Dutch, 368,000 British, and 76,000 other whites. Within five years a policy favourable to the introduction of British settlers, together with the industrial expansion of the Transvaal, which might increase the British population from 100,000 to 250,000, would turn the scale, so that out of a total of 1,270,000, there would be 615,000 British, 544,000 Dutch, and 111,000 other whites. On these figures the representation in a Federal Assembly, on a basis of one member to every 10,000 whites, would number 64 British and 58 Dutch. If the Dutch representatives did not form a solid block, the predominance of British ideals could then be regarded as assured.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Asquith (*Lord Oxford and Asquith*).

13/9/01. . . . I am most anxious to keep in touch and have not only your kindly judgment . . . but, as far as possible, your convinced agreement with what I am doing. This implies *per contra* that you or one of you should let me know from time to time if anything seems going wrong on my side, so that I may, if possible, explain, or if I can alter, as I readily would alter anything that I do not think to be vital, to meet your difficulties. I do so certainly want to keep this subject national, one with which reasonable men of various shades of opinion (I of course absolutely exclude all those, whether Irish or "Harcourts," who want the thing to fail, or at least lose no opportunity of helping to that noble end) can agree, and will stick to, despite political choppings and changings. And this ought to be easier because my immediate Chief (though, carried away by partisanship, he constantly speaks like an extremist) is *in Council* moderate, and really a statesman. There are just two points on which I want to sound a warning note to-day, not addressed to you personally at all, but to practically all friends of a reasonable settlement at Home, whether supporters of the Government or Opposition men.

Undoubtedly we all desire, we *must* ultimately have, self-government here. Big white communities at the antipodes cannot be autocratically governed from London. But there is a rather dangerous insistence in many quarters (Balfour is as risky in this respect as anybody) on the importance of self-government coming *very soon*. Now the best people here, including the reconciled or

reconcilable Dutch, are of a very different mind. They say, *and rightly*, " Complete self-government means parties. *Parties, if we are compelled to form them at once*, will inevitably be formed on purely racial lines. Once in those ruts, we may never get out of them, and you will have created all over South Africa the deplorable state of things at present existing, but existing *only* in the Cape Colony. Give British and Dutch time to settle down together and to work together for a few years in the recuperation of the country on non-political lines, and to agree or differ on other than purely racial issues, then the split, when it comes, may mean no more than it does in healthy homogeneous communities. It will not divide society from top to bottom, as it must if it is simply a racial split deepened till it reaches the very centre of the earth." That is my language but not my idea, though my ideas agree with them. It is the *cri de cœur* of many simple worthy Dutch folk, of all of them in fact, in whom the bitterness of the struggle does not obliterate for the moment all power of reflection. Indeed it is from the British, not the Dutch, that the cry for self-government in the new territories will soonest come. But that can be largely met by giving early wide powers of municipal self-government, especially to the Rand District. It is local questions which will for a considerable time to come absorb the interests of the independent and revenant Uitlander population.

Point No. 2 is even a more delicate one. It is resettlement. There is a great danger, if we are to think solely of bringing back the Afrikanders, whether prisoners of war or refugees, on to the land without mixing with them *at once from the start* a British element. It is easy to do, if we steadily avail ourselves of all opportunities. We will, of course, be howled at by the people who *don't want* this country to settle down in peace under the British flag, and its inhabitants gradually diffused as they must, as it is evidently a country worth living in, into one people. They will screech about " extermination of the Dutch " and all the rest of it. Nonsense. *I* no more want to exterminate the Dutch than I want to exterminate the British. But neither do I want the country of Dutch and the towns of British, and a racial division aggravated by an economic one. The bulk of the country people will be Dutch, and the bulk of the town people British, in any case. But there is just all the difference between the majority, and the whole of a particular class of the community, being of a single race.

If anyone wants to realize the importance of that, let him just go and look at the profound difference in the Colony between the Districts where the agricultural population is wholly Dutch, and those where there is a British element. But, if this present un-

paralleled opportunity is to be taken of introducing a new element, which is not only politically but economically most desirable, "for we must increase the numbers of the go-ahead farmers if we can," then it won't do simply to help the expelled Dutch back indiscriminately on to their farms. . . . Let the State buy . . . and use the land to bring in a good class of settler—not "tommies" but men with farming experience and a little capital—Australians, Canadians, Scotch Lowland farmers, the best of the Yeomanry, and the best of the young British Colonists from the Cape and Natal. With a proper organization and a moderate expenditure of money, which can be amply secured, we might get some thousands of such men—they *exist* and many of them are eager—and they would leaven the whole farming community. . . . You were quite right in saying that this would require more than £500,000, but the £500,000 was of course only taken to meet the immediately necessary first steps. We shall not get far, either in bringing back the old population, or in introducing a new one in the present twelve months. Ultimately we shall want a big loan, and I have hope that, provided we can show a good scheme, there will be no hesitation in allowing us to borrow freely for the purpose. There is no need to fear any considerable loss, none at all, I should say, in the case of the new settlers, and but little in that of the returning ex-burghers, if proper care is taken in selecting the right ones. . . .

After the completion of the reports by Mr. Willcocks and the Land Settlement Commission (p. 279), Milner felt that the time had come to lay before the Home Government his policy of Land Settlement, and the immediate measures he deemed necessary for promoting it :

Extract from Despatch.[1] *Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.*

25/1/02. The time has now arrived when it is necessary to adopt a policy involving continuous and consistent action over a considerable period of time, with reference to a question which is of the deepest importance to this country, viz. the settlement of British Colonists upon the land. This subject has for long occupied my attention, and, in a tentative way, a good deal has been done. But we have reached a point when little more progress can be made without a decision on the main issues. The question is, whether British colonization is to be undertaken on a large and effective scale, under Government control and with Government assistance, or to be left to take care of itself. . . . The principal consideration is the necessity of avoiding a sharp

[1] This despatch is printed in full in Cd. 1163, pp. 88–91.

contrast and antagonism in the character and sentiments of the population between the country districts and the towns. If we do nothing, we shall be confronted sooner or later with an industrial urban population, rapidly increasing, and almost wholly British in sentiment, and, on the other hand, a rural population, wholly Dutch, agriculturally unprogressive. . . . It is our duty to provide for the influx of a selected British population, who will do much to consolidate South African sentiment in the general interests of the Empire. I believe, and Mr. Willcocks' report will bear me out, that there is a great future for South African farming. The country districts have hitherto remained much under-populated, and almost wholly undeveloped. If we are to do justice to their great capabilities, it can only be by some wide scheme of concerted action.

For these various reasons, it appears that the judicious settlement of a large number of colonists of the best class is of the first importance for the economic development of the country, and for the gradual and peaceful solution of the race difficulty in South Africa. To satisfy these demands, it is clear that no small and makeshift scheme will suffice. Land settlement must be undertaken on a large scale; otherwise, however useful, it will be *politically* unimportant. Moreover, it is essential that, as Mr. Arnold Forster's Commission insisted, only the best quality of land should be secured for the settlement, at any rate in the first stages of the movement, and that the conditions should be such as to attract the best quality of settler. At the same time, the scheme must be in its details sufficiently elastic to meet the requirements of different classes, men of some capital, as well as men who bring with them little more than experience and character, and to vary with the varying character of the farms. . . . For any amount of good land, which we are able to offer on reasonable terms, we shall have plenty of applicants of the class we require, viz. industrious and experienced men, who want the land in order really to farm it, and to live on it, and not merely as a speculation or a makeshift. I know that this has often been doubted. But seeing the number of men of that type now actually in the country—overseas Colonists, South African Colonists, Yeomen from home—who either have applied or are only waiting for some definite announcement, and having regard to the immense correspondence with which I have been favoured from home and the Colonies, showing that many others are ready to come, I make no doubt whatever that we could get 10,000 or more agricultural settlers within a twelvemonth, if we were able to provide for them. Our great difficulty is not to get the men, but to get the land of suitable quality on which to plant them. . . .

The first thing which must be done, if we are to deal seriously with the settlement question, is to increase the amount of Government land. . . . I do not see how any large schemes can be carried out unless the Government is armed with a general power of expropriation. . . . There is an exact precedent in the legislation of New Zealand. The Land for Settlement Act, 1894, enables the Government of that Colony, if no private agreement can be arrived at, to take land compulsorily for settlement, subject to a price fixed by valuation and a certain compensation. . . . As to the Boer farmers who would need Government assistance to enable them to restart farming: If, instead of *lending* them money, and so converting them into debtors of the State for an indefinite period, we were to *give* them the money, or the money's worth, in the shape of stock, seed, implements, &c., of which they stand in need, and to take in exchange some of the land which they possess in excess, and of which we stand in need, would not the arrangement be best for both parties? It is our duty and interest to preserve the Boer as a farmer; but it is neither our duty nor our interest to preserve him as a large negligent landowner. . . .

How are the funds to be provided for carrying out that policy? The means at present at our disposal for acquiring land are quite inadequate even for the initiation of any large plan of land settlement. We are at best in a position to provide for three or four hundred settlers. To make any real impression, we require, at least, as many thousands. . . . With the limited means at our disposal, we have already achieved not a little . . . but . . . any considerable further progress is impossible without a decision from H.M. Government on the question of finance. The time is fast approaching when it will be absolutely necessary to raise loans for both new Colonies to meet expenses arising immediately out of the war.

I wish to place on record my profound conviction that, unless in raising these loans we provide a substantial sum for the purchase of land and the settlement thereon of farmers of British race, an opportunity will be lost which will never recur, and the neglect of which will have the most prejudicial effect on the future peace and prosperity of South Africa. . . . If we lose the next year or two, we lose the game, and without that power of acting promptly, which a ready command of money alone can give, we shall begin to throw away opportunities from this moment. . . . What I want to put plainly to H.M. Government, are these two questions: (i) Are we to be allowed to go on purchasing good land, by voluntary agreement wherever possible, but compulsorily, if necessary? And, assuming this question to be answered in

the affirmative, (2) what amount shall we be able to dispose of for this purpose in the immediate future?

In order to facilitate a decision on the latter point, it would be best to put forward a definite proposal. And the proposal which I venture to make is, that we should earmark a sum of two millions in the case of the Transvaal, and one million in the case of the Orange River Colony, out of the first loans raised by either Colony, for the purpose of land purchase and settlement. . . . The moment I know that the course proposed has the approval of H.M. Government, and that the means of carrying it out will be forthcoming, it will be possible, and highly necessary, to set to work in a thorough and systematic manner to complete our organization. The present temporary Land Boards will have to be greatly strengthened. More expert advice will have to be secured, and a vigorous course of "prospecting" for suitable land, primarily in the conquered territory of the Orange River Colony and in the southern Transvaal, will have to be entered upon. I would also advocate the immediate establishment of several model farms—not fewer, I think, than two in each Colony—with experienced agriculturalists as directors, to carry out experiments in stock-raising, and the introduction of new varieties of cereals, forage crops, grasses, fruit trees, and timber. The benefit of these practical schools of agriculture will not be confined, of course, to the new settlers. . . .

(*Milner then outlined the terms he proposed for repayment of funds advanced to settlers* (*v.* Cd. 1163).)

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. D. E. Hutchins, Conservator of Forests, Cape Town.

JOHANNESBURG. 20/2/02. . . . I am greatly perplexed about the best course to adopt with regard to Forestry in the new Colonies and especially the Transvaal. It seems obvious to me that this ought to be a great forest country and better judges than myself are of the same opinion. But I do not know how to set about it. There are two distinct chapters in the consideration of this matter. One is the best organization of a permanent Forestry Branch of some future Board of Agriculture. My idea is that we might do the thing on a very big scale. But how, that is the point? What are the best models to follow? Are these models applicable to our conditions? I should be very grateful to you for any enlightenment on this subject—for any indication as to authorities. Secondly, pending the arrival of the time when we are in a position to do something permanent and large, which is not yet, I am worried to see even a year go by in which I am doing nothing at all. This is especially distressing to me, when I observe the extreme rapidity of growth of all the trees here. A year more or less may not seem

much time to lose in tree-planting in England, but to me it represents an appreciable slice of the time which has to be lived through before a tree becomes useful. Apart from the value of the timber, we could alter the whole aspect of the Transvaal, by judicious planting, in say eight years. Why should we take nine? . . .

At the end of October, the High Commissioner paid a visit to Natal, which he felt was long overdue. Arriving, unheralded, at Maritzburg on the 25th, he was the guest of the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir H. McCallum, at Government House. But if unheralded, the outburst of spontaneous cheering which greeted him in the streets was of the sort which is reserved only for those who have touched the heart of a nation and evoked its gratitude. After receiving an Address from the Mayor (Mr. G. J. Macfarlane) and Corporation, Milner added his tribute to the loyalty and services of the Garden Colony to those which had been expressed by the greatest statesmen of the Empire and their Sovereign. Comparing the rescued, promising and prosperous conditions of Natal with the terrible condition of the rebellious districts in the Cape Colony, he drew the moral that it refuted the odious saying that loyalty in South Africa did not pay. What he and they wanted, he continued, was a peaceful, prosperous South Africa, one great community under the British flag. But they must have patience, and not be in too great a hurry. " The first condition of a sound Confederation is a frank exchange of views and a good mutual confidence. If we are to have a united South Africa it cannot be by any dictation from without. The people of South Africa must accomplish it for themselves. You must not approach the questions as Natalians, or as Rhodesians, or Cape Colonists, or whatever it may be, but as South Africans. . . . Every action, every day brings us nearer to the goal, but the distance to the goal is no matter to us. . . ." [1]

On the 28th, Lord Milner visited Durban, where he met with an enthusiastic reception. In reply to an address by the Corporation, he said : " I wish I could have congratulated you on the fact that not only Natal but all South Africa was at rest. But I have come to the conclusion that it is no use waiting till the war is over. In a formal sense it may never be over, but may just slowly burn itself out, as it is doing now." These spasmodic outbursts of flames might keep on occurring as after every conflagration, " but it would be a great mistake to allow these circumstances to prevent our

[1] *Natal Witness*, 26/10/01.

gradually resuming our normal life, and gradually restarting in the conquered territories not only industry, but even to some extent agriculture." He then laid stress upon the need of increasing the number of settlers on the land. "We want a strong Natal," he concluded, "to co-operate in the production of a strong united Nation, one of a group of sister Nations spread throughout the world, united and not divided by the ocean, each independent in its own concerns, all indissolubly allied for a common purpose, all free and willing subjects of the most ancient and august Monarchy in the world—what we mean, in short, by the great term, the British Empire."

From Durban he went to Ladysmith, where he received an address from the Mayor (Mr. J. Farquhar), and Corporation.

A curious interpretation was given by Lord Rosebery, in a famous speech at Chesterfield (16/12/01), to the above-quoted phrase that "in a formal sense the war might never be over." Repudiating the charge of "methods of barbarism," which had been levelled against the Government and Army by Campbell-Bannerman, Rosebery made a clear bid for a Centre Party of moderate Liberals, "with a clean slate." He pronounced in favour of vigorous conduct of the war to the promptest and most complete solution; but denounced Milner's phrase, as indicating a policy of hunting the Boers to extermination. At the same time, he entirely dissociated himself from Courtney's frenzied cry (9/11/01), for the dismissal of Chamberlain and Milner as the fatal obstacles to peace. He also threw out suggestions for negotiations with Kruger and the Boer refugees in Europe.

Extract from Letter. Mr. (Lord) Haldane to Lord Milner.

London. 22/12/01. . . . With the interpretation Rosebery has put at Chesterfield on an imperfectly reported phrase in your Durban speech, none of us agreed. We took you to mean simply that long before the war had formally ended the Civil reconstruction would have begun, and that apart from this a formal ending of the war was not so important as people might imagine, for it would just die out. But that part of Rosebery's speech notwithstanding, I think that he has transformed the political position. He declared in substance for your and the Government policy, with the result that C.B. and the pro-Boers are in a miserable plight. It was part of his art that by being critical he has detached the Centre Liberals from C.B. (the Session ought to show this), and made continuity of policy an assured thing. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir Clinton Dawkins.

4/1/02. . . . We are all entirely in the dark as to what Rosebery really is playing at. Perhaps he hasn't quite made up his own mind. My one prayer is that, if he doesn't mean to make a strong party himself, he won't spoil the hand of Asquith, Grey, and Haldane in building up one. I should have great hope of the Liberal Imperialists in the future if I was quite certain that they meant to have the courage of their opinions, and were prepared to be out in the cold for some time. A party on their lines would be certain of victory in the long run, and able to do a great deal for the country. But they must have conviction and patience. . . . I was delighted to read what you said about the weakness resulting to our Empire from its wholly unorganized condition. I have been preaching this for a long time now without much success, partly because I can't speak publicly. It is distressing to me how few men see what is so absolutely obvious. The fashion just now is to boast how the war has united us, and how strong it shows the Empire to be. And it does show great *potential* strength, but nothing more. It also shows a total want of any permanent binding force, or rational system. The condition of South Africa to-day is a most bitter commentary on our supposed Imperial strength. Here is a single Colony, not by any means one of the largest in the Empire, in which a bare majority of disaffected people is able to disorganize our whole South African policy, and indeed threaten the foundations of the Empire itself. A real Imperial Parliament would settle its hash in a day's debate, but our so-called Imperial Parliament daren't do it: partly because it is dimly conscious of its own unrepresentative character as regards the Empire as a whole, and partly because it is absorbed in the comparatively small issues, jealousies, and animosities of local home politics. Two things constantly strike me. One is the soundness of the British nation as a whole, contrasted with the rottenness of party politics. The other is the still greater soundness on Imperial questions of the Colonies, especially New Zealand and Australia. We Federationists have always been told that you cannot have a system without the informing spirit. Now we have got the informing spirit, but the politicians have not ingenuity enough, or go enough, to devise the system. If Asquith, you, and others could be bitten with the idea of giving the great British race throughout the world the one thing it still needs politically—organization—you would have a place in history equal to the men who made the American Constitution, or the authors of United Germany. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir Clinton Dawkins.

16/1/02. . . . As regards Rosebery I have three feelings: Firstly, great admiration for his speech as a whole; Secondly, complete agreement with his general political attitude; Thirdly, equally complete disagreement with his particular suggestions about getting out of the South African difficulty. I am quite unaffected by his criticism of my remarks about the war having "no formal end." It is absurd—I mean the personal part of it—and not worth troubling one's head about. As for his suggestion of negotiations: all negotiation is in my opinion bad, negotiation with Kruger absolutely detestable. The only chance with the Boers is to make them thoroughly understand that our quarrel was not with them, but precisely with the Kruger gang—the authors of the War policy, steeped from head to foot in corruption, who, when they had got their country into an awful mess, ran away and left her. There is a strong feeling against Kruger and Company among those Boers whom we may hope to win first. Any chance of that kind would be absolutely knocked on the head, if we were to show them the smallest recognition. . . . On the question of amnesty, Rosebery is equally unwise. The time to talk of amnesty is when the war is over, when I shall probably be among its strongest advocates. To preach amnesty now, in the midst of war and rebellion, and above all to suggest *buying peace by amnesty*, is extraordinarily unwise. You may say "Isn't it an odd thing that Rosebery is so wise on the whole but should be foolish in this particular?" Not at all. He simply is very ill-informed as to the facts; having accepted, like most Englishmen, a highly coloured Boer version of them. It is not the out and out pro-Boers that I am afraid of—it is the pro-Britons steeped in Boer statements about South Africa. This is what the Boers have accomplished. They have not converted many men to hostility against their country, but they *have* succeeded in making a very large number of good, sound-hearted men see nothing but Boers. I have never been an optimist, but any man in his senses living in South Africa at this moment would see that this thing is coming to an end, and that however slowly it may die, the Boer cause *is* dying, unless we ourselves apply violent tonics to revive it. The meeting of Parliament will of course be such a tonic, but I do not think it will be strong enough to set the patient up. The advantage for the future of a war ending as it is ending is enormous. I can see my way to a settlement with a free hand. But if we are to be hampered by terms, I shall be happy to hand the impossible tangle to somebody else. . . .

I don't want you to think that because I am dead against any

negotiations with the Boers, I am therefore indisposed to make it easy for them to surrender, either individually or in numbers. This depends much more upon Kitchener than upon me. But Kitchener is exceedingly flexible in this matter, and leaders of the enemy know very well by this time that, if they come in bringing any reasonable number of men with them, they will, as a matter of fact, not be banished. At the same time Kitchener is dead against any going back upon the Banishment Proclamation ; firstly, because every change of front has the worst possible effect, and, secondly, because it disorganizes the remnant of the Boer army by making it very difficult for them to get officers. Men fight shy of promotion with banishment hanging over their heads. I have another reason for wishing to uphold it, which appeals less to him, and that is that there are a certain number, not a large number, of the leaders who are so absolutely poisonous that we should have in any case to keep them out of the country when the war was over. The Proclamation, if upheld, enables us to do this without difficulty, while at the same time amnestying as many as we choose. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

20/12/01. [PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL] . . . The truth is C.B. and his congeners have been thoroughly wrong-headed about this business from first to last. They began by praising up Schreiner, at the very moment when he was insisting on leaving Kimberley undefended and assuring me daily with passionate vehemence that the Boers would never, never, never invade British territory. And they have gone from bad to worse ever since, restrained at times by public opinion, which I am convinced is dead against them all along, and would *simply loathe them* if it knew enough about S. Africa to appreciate what they are doing, but always breaking out, when any particularly disagreeable aspect of the war temporarily diverted men's minds from the main issue. It is quite ludicrous the way in which all their interest seems to centre in the enemy—never for a moment do they consider our friends, or even those Boers who have come over to us. It is only the desperadoes still in the field, whose cause they espouse, and the fewer these latter become, the more wildly anxious are their British sympathizers to give away everybody else for their sakes. Just now, I see, the pro-Boers are all screaming for " terms of peace." The one thing they seem to care about is that the enemy should not be simply conquered, but should be able hereafter to say that they have not been, and should manage somehow to worry us into concessions fraught with future embarrassment. . . .

There are only two things which can placate the extreme Boers, one is the restoration of their absolute independence, the other the enslavement of the native. The one thing which might possibly reconcile them to British rule, would be a native policy, the direct opposite to any we could adopt. As for the moderate section, it is not by any promises we make now, but by what we actually do hereafter, that we can win or alienate them. If we do win them, it will not be by the political nostrums so dear to the pro-Boers, such as immediate self-government or self-government at a *fixed date*, but by practical measures, by good administration, railways, agricultural improvements, &c., &c. I am all for such a policy, which fits in perfectly with the general lines which we ought in any case to follow. But while I hope much from it, as a means of winning over a section of the Boers, I never lose sight of the fact that the " conciliation " of our former enemies ought never to be our *first* object. Our first object and duty is to make sure of the position by strengthening the British element, whether the Boers like it or not. I am constantly reminded of Egypt, and how greatly we added to our difficulties in the settlement of that country by the declarations we made at the outset. This is just what the pro-Boers would like to make us do again in the present case. Those declarations in the case of Egypt were made in order to allay suspicion and disarm hostility, foreign and domestic. They had no effect whatever on the suspicion and the hostility, but they obstructed and delayed the work of settlement in the most serious way. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to E. B. Iwan Müller.[1]

4/1/02. . . . Your sidelights on politics are very interesting. I fear I cannot repay them in kind. We have no sidelights here: it is all in the full glare. I pray vainly and constantly for a little wholesome obscurity. However, the whole fight is evidently going to rage over us this next session. What nonsense it all is! The B.P. as you truly say, is splendid, with its mind made up and quite absolutely unperturbed. But the influence of party on national affairs is more poisonous than ever. We really must get an Imperial Council to take things that matter out of the hands of that mob at Westminster. I think the journalists at home ought really to organize something like a regular campaign in favour of the decent organization of the British Empire. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mrs. Montefiore.

6/11/01. . . . We got back safely from Natal. Though most of my time there was taken up with business and functions, I

[1] Of the *Daily Telegraph*, and author of *Lord Milner in South Africa* (1902).

managed to steal 3 days to see the battle-fields, and a most interesting, though melancholy, sight it was. I managed on each occasion to have with me some one who had been in the particular fight the scene of which I was visiting, and, on the whole, the places told their story better than I had expected. How any one, after seeing Colenso and the neighbourhood, can believe in Buller's generalship, passes my comprehension. . . .

Meanwhile, Milner's impatience with the slow progress of affairs was being shared at home.

Extract from Letter. Sir Clinton Dawkins to Lord Milner.

31/10/01. . . . I found a great feeling of dissatisfaction and discontent prevailing when we returned from America. Impatience at the protracted war, disgust with the Government, which with the exceptions of Chamberlain and Brodrick seems absolutely inert . . . The feeling of dissatisfaction has been somewhat allayed these last few days by your admirable Natal speeches, admirable in substance and form, and by the reported captures in S. Africa without " untoward incidents " effected by the younger leaders of columns, like Colonel Dawkins. But it exists and will, I think, gather force, though it is very impotent and inarticulate, or rather too loosely articulate. The only remedy people clutch at, and people on the Unionist side as well as Liberals, is a new Government of more vigorous younger men with Grey, Asquith, &c. But that seems very far off. In the City, of course, though this does not count for much, the feeling is particularly loud and general. Business is almost extinct, at a moment when foreign competition is beginning to tell, while the menace of further borrowings and sustained high taxation hangs over us. . . . But looking beneath all this, I don't think there is any serious revulsion from the hot to the cold fit. I think there is a steady and dogged determination to see it through, and that your labours in the summer have not been in vain. Far from it. Yet that the Government is losing hold is, I think undoubted ; and flabby as the Government is, we can permit no change at present, nor is it likely to take place. *Haec de Republica.* . . .

Extract from Telegram. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

31/10/01. [SECRET AND PERSONAL] . . . When you left I believe we were entirely agreed as to the military policy to be pursued and intended to discuss it fully with Lord Kitchener. We have heard very little since of the result of the discussions, which have not apparently led to any change of policy. The war drags on and there is no assurance that it may not continue for

months and years to come. This naturally leads to some public impatience and irritation, and unless we can give clearer evidence of definite plans and expectations, we shall have great difficulties when Parliament meets. Your idea, concurred in by us, was that the drives over large districts were becoming ineffective, that we should endeavour to confine ourselves to areas where the resumption of agriculture and industry was most important and which might be guarded by the Constabulary assisted by blockhouses and by garrisons and bases of supply at principal centres. That we should also form mobile columns to be employed in dispersing any concentration outside those areas and then to extend limits from time to time. I do not gather that this has been done. I have no account of any such protected areas where industry is being resumed on a large scale. The drives still continue, in many cases with disproportionate results and we still employ 200,000 troops and 500 guns to deal with 10,000 men without any guns at all. Secondly, I suggested with Lord Roberts's entire approval, that one or more flying columns of 1,000 or at most 2,000 men should be formed with the special object of catching Steyn, Botha and other leaders. We are informed that six such bodies have been formed—too many I think for efficiency—and hitherto they have failed in their principal purpose. . . . We might use this plan, which we do not think has been fully grasped, to catch one leader first, say Botha or Steyn, and if successful we could then try it on with another. We think the war will never end until the leaders are captured, and the surrender of one would be more important than the results of all the drives, which only secure unimportant diminutions. Then as to concentration camps, the death-rate in which is causing such anxiety here. Have you discussed possibilities of removing them to the coast, which would set free lines of communication and enable more refugees to return to Transvaal? Personally I think those in camps, perhaps with some definite exceptions, might have option to leave them. I do not see that they can be dangerous, and if they remained of their own free will, the responsibility would be off our shoulders. I know it is a delicate matter interfering with military discretion, but you might discuss these questions with Lord Kitchener, and in any case I desire fullest possible report and explanations from you. Also I am most anxious to have an account of what has been done in connection with revival of industrial and agricultural enterprise. . . .

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

6/11/01. [SECRET AND PERSONAL] Despite repeated disasters there is substantial progress in clearing country. Lines of com-

munication are now very seldom interrupted and districts of greatest importance are virtually clear of enemy. Unfortunately they are as yet of little use to us, as Lord Kitchener does not see his way to allow resumption of industry and agriculture on any considerable scale. Under strong pressure he has gone a little way in allowing resumption of mining operations and return of refugees. I shall not cease to urge a bolder policy in these respects on every possible occasion, but matter is delicate. I cannot press my personal view beyond certain point in face of assertion of risk to efficiency of army and hindrance to military operations. As regards flying columns, it is even more difficult for me to interfere, as matter is purely military. Any view on conduct of war which H.M.'s Govt. desire to impress on Lord K. would be more effective coming direct from War Office than through me. Lord K. himself is always striving after mobility, and there is constant improvement in this respect, though not yet enough. Personally, while attaching highest value to mobility, I think intimate knowledge of country equally important. I do not believe that we shall ever catch leaders by chasing them round S. Africa. If we outpace them, they will dodge us. Mobility and local knowledge can both only be perfected by more and more decentralization and less racing about. This, also, I suppose we shall learn in time. Meanwhile I cannot expect Lord K. to attach importance to my views on strategy. To intrude them might only disturb our otherwise good relations, and would produce absolutely no effect. . . .

But the other side of the picture was presented in a masterly despatch in which, in response to Chamberlain's request for "an account of what has been done in connection with revival of industrial and agricultural enterprise" (p. 293), Milner reviewed the whole position in the New Colonies: Cd. 903. pp. 129-136.

General Review of the Situation in the Two New Colonies

Extract from Despatch. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

15/11/01. . . . Without being unduly optimistic, it is impossible not to be struck by two great changes for the better in the military position since the time when I first took up my residence in the Transvaal—just eight months ago. These are the now almost absolute safety and uninterrupted working of the railways and the complete pacification of certain central districts. As regards the railways, I cannot illustrate the contrast better than by my own experiences. In the end of last year and the earlier

months of this I had occasion to make several journeys between Cape Town and Johannesburg or Pretoria, and between Johannesburg and Bloemfontein. Though most careful preparations were made and every precaution taken, I was frequently "hung up" on these journeys because the line had been blown up—not, I think, with any reference to my movements, but in the ordinary course of affairs. Small bodies of the enemy were always hovering about, and a state of extreme vigilance, not to say anxiety, was observable almost everywhere along the line. Since my return from England I have again traversed the country from East London to Bloemfontein and Johannesburg, and from Johannesburg to Durban and back, to say nothing of constant journeys between this place and Pretoria. On no single occasion has there been the slightest hitch or the least cause for alarm. The trains have been absolutely up to time, and very good time. . . . Indeed it is the inadequacy of the lines themselves to meet the enormous and ever-increasing requirements resulting from the war, and the shortness of rolling-stock, not any interference from the enemy, which causes us whatever difficulties—and they are still considerable—we now labour under in the matter of transport. When the large amount of additional rolling-stock ordered for the Imperial Military Railways last summer is received, and the first instalment will arrive very shortly, there will be a further great and progressive improvement in the conveyance of supplies and materials for the troops, the civil population of the towns, and the Concentration Camps. . . .

A vivid description ensues of the advance made in clearing the country and extending the protected areas, and of the contraction of Boer resistance "within certain wide but fairly well-defined districts." From these considerations, the writer proceeded to draw conclusions for the present and the future; showing, incidentally, how the demand upon the railways and the needs of the Concentration Camps were affecting the problem of resettlement.

He continued:

"The contraction of the theatre of war is doubtless due to the increased difficulty which the enemy have in obtaining horses and supplies, but, above all, to the great reduction in their numbers. It is, perhaps, idle to speculate what those numbers are, but, personally, I do not believe there are more than 8,000 fighting men left in the two late Republics. Indeed, I think this is, if anything, an over-estimate. On the other hand, the majority of these are of the best fighting quality, as has been clearly shown by the desperate encounters of the last six weeks. To wear out the resistance of the Boers still in the field—not more than one-

eighth, I think, of the total number of burghers who have, first and last, been engaged in the war—may take a considerable time yet, and will almost certainly involve further losses. I will not attempt to forecast either the time or the cost. What seems evident is that the concentration of the Boers, and the substitution of several fairly well-defined small campaigns for that sort of running fight all over the country which preceded them, is on the whole an advantage to us, and tends to bring the end of the struggle within a more measurable distance. Our great object, it seems to me, should be to keep the Boers within the areas of their main strength, even if such concentration makes the commandos individually more dangerous and involves more desperate fighting, and meanwhile to push on with might and main the settlement of those parts of the country out of which they have been driven. No doubt this is a difficult, and must be a gradual, process. The full extent of the difficulty will appear from the sequel. But it is the point to which the main efforts, of the civil authorities at any rate, should be continually directed.

If the latest phase of the military situation is maintained, i.e. if we are able to prevent the Boers from breaking back into the cleared areas, or from injuring the railway lines, I can see no reason why the work of settlement should not proceed at a greatly quickened pace in the immediate future. The most urgent point is to bring back the exiled Uitlanders to the Rand, always provided that they are able to find employment when they arrive there. But the basis of any general revival of industrial and commercial activity on the Rand is the resumption of mining operations. So far it has only been found possible to proceed very slowly in this respect. The full capacity of the Rand is about 6,000 stamps. . . . Up till now permission has been granted for the working of 600 stamps, but only 450 have actually been started. This is slow work, but even this beginning, modest as it is, has made an immense difference in the aspect of Johannesburg since first I came here in March last. The number of people allowed to return from time to time, for other than mining employments, is in proportion to the number of stamps restarted. This, no doubt, is a wise principle, for business generally can only expand *pari passu* with the resumption of mining. Up to the present something like 10,000 people have been allowed to come up, the vast majority of them being refugees. . . . The best that can be said on the thorny subject of the return of the refugees, is that latterly the rate of return has been steadily increasing. Last month the military authorities allowed us to grant ordinary permits. . . . This month the number has been raised to 800. I need hardly say that the selection of 800 people out of something like 50 times that number is an onerous

and ungrateful task. South Africa simply rings with complaints as to favouritism in the distribution of permits. As a matter of fact, whatever mistakes have been made, there has been no favouritism. . . . The great bulk of the permits have been allotted by the Central Registration Committee, a large, capable, and most representative body of the citizens of this town and neighbourhood. And they have been allotted on well-defined principles and with great impartiality. It would be impossible under the circumstances to avoid some errors, but after having personally inquired into a great number of complaints, I have come to the clear conclusion that the Government is greatly indebted to the hard work, the public spirit, and the excellent judgment of the members of the Committee. . . .

There can, I think, be little doubt that the present rate of return can be maintained, and I am not without hope that it may in a short time be considerably increased. But this depends entirely, for the reasons already given, on the question whether the resumption of mining operations can be quickened. The obstacles to such a quickening are twofold; first, want of native labour; secondly, want of trucks to bring up not only the increased supplies which a larger population necessitates, but also, and this is even a more serious matter, to bring up the material required for their work. The latter, I need hardly say, is a very heavy item, not only in the case of the mines, but in the case of all those other industries, building, for instance, which only need a chance in order to burst into extreme activity in this place. For the Rand requires just now an increase of everything—dwelling-houses, offices, roads, sewers, lighting, water supply, &c., &c. Capital would be readily forthcoming for every kind of construction, and many skilled workmen are waiting at the coast. But it is no use bringing up workmen to live in the dearest place in the world unless they have the materials to work with. The most necessary materials, however, are bulky, and the carrying capacity of the railways, greatly improved as it is, gives no promise of an early importation of quantities of bulky material, if the other and more urgent demands upon our means of transport are to be satisfied.

As regards native labour for the mines, the greater development of which is a condition of all other industrial development, the difficulty is that, while natives can be found in abundance to do surface work, the number of those who are willing to go underground is limited. There are only certain tribes among whom underground workers can be found in any great numbers, and these reside mostly in Portuguese territory. As you are aware, difficulties have arisen about the introduction of Portuguese natives, and the matter is at present the subject of negotiations between the Governor-

General of Mozambique and myself. . . . But even then we shall not be able to count on any great immediate influx of labourers from Portuguese territory. I understand, indeed, that there are a large number of natives anxious to come, but the military authorities are, doubtless for good reasons, exceedingly reluctant to allow much immigration of any kind by the Delagoa Bay line. . . . The delay in obtaining native labour would be more serious, if it were not for the existence of that other and still greater obstacle to the rapid revival of industry here which I have already dwelt on, namely, the difficulty of transport. And this latter difficulty is immensely aggravated at the present time by the constantly increasing requirements of the Concentration Camps. Not only has the number of people in these camps increased, with overwhelming rapidity, to an extent never contemplated when they were first started, but the extreme state of destitution in which many of the people arrived, and the deplorable amount of sickness which has all along existed among them, create a demand for a great deal more than mere primary necessities, such as food and shelter, if the condition of the camps is to be anything like what we should wish to see it. . . . Evidently these requirements enter into competition, and most serious competition, with the supply of food and materials necessary for the revival even of our central industry, not to say of industrial and agricultural activity elsewhere in the new Colonies, of which, under the circumstances, it is, for the moment, unfortunately impossible to think. To decide between the competing demands upon the still very limited amount of truckage available for civil purposes, after the paramount requirements of the army have been satisfied, is indeed a most difficult and delicate task.

Whether we have done all for the best, it is not for me to say. That any amount of conscientious thought and labour has been devoted, on all hands, to grappling with the problem, I can confidently assert. And I am equally confident that whatever has been done, and whatever may yet be done, the amount of hardship must have been and must still be very great. It would be amusing, if amusement were possible in the presence of so much sadness and suffering, to put side by side the absolutely contradictory criticisms, all equally vehement, to which our action is subjected. On the one hand is the outcry against the cruelty and heartlessness manifested in not making better provision for the people in the concentration camps : on the other, the equally loud outcry against our injustice in leaving the British refugees in idleness and poverty at the coast, in order to keep the people in the concentration camps supplied with every luxury and comfort. I have even frequently heard the expression that we are "spoiling"

the people in the Boer camps. We are, alas, not in a position to spoil anybody, however much we might desire to do so. . . .

After further consideration of the problems of the Concentration Camps and the return of refugees and prisoners of war, the High Commissioner concluded :

Altogether, the number and complexity of the tasks, embraced under the general term " resettlement ", which are either already upon us or will come upon us as the country gradually quiets down, are sufficient to daunt the most stout-hearted. And yet the tone of hopefulness among the British population who have so far returned to the new Colonies is very marked, especially in the Transvaal. It is not incompatible with many grievances, and with much grumbling at the Administration. But that was only to be expected, and is of very small importance as long as people are prepared to tackle the big work of reconstruction in front of them in a vigorous and sanguine spirit. Nor is this hopefulness, in my opinion, at all ill-founded, however gloomy may be the immediate outlook. Terrible as have been the ravages of war and the destruction of agricultural capital, a destruction which is now pretty well complete, the great fact remains that the Transvaal possesses an amount of mineral wealth, virtually unaffected by the war, which will ensure the prosperity of South Africa for the next fifty years ; and other resources, both industrial and agricultural, which, properly developed, should make it a rich country, humanly speaking, for ever. Economically, all that is required is that a very small proportion of the superabundant but exhaustible riches of the mines should be devoted to developing the vast permanent sources of wealth which the country possesses, and which will maintain a European population twenty times as large as the present, when all the gold has been dug out. No doubt it is not economic measures alone which will ensure that result. A social change is also necessary, viz. the introduction of fresh blood, of a body of enterprising European settlers, especially on the land, to reinforce the Boer population, who have been far too few, and far too easy-going, to do even the remotest justice to the vast natural capabilities of the soil, on which, for the most part, they have done little more than squat. But then the introduction of the right type of agricultural settlers, though it will not come about of itself, would not seem to be a task beyond the powers of statesmanship to grapple with. . . .

Milner concluded with a tribute to the work which was being quietly done to build up the framework of the new Administration :

Thanks to the great energy displayed by the principal officers of the Administration—by Major Goold-Adams and Mr. Wilson at Bloemfontein; by Mr. Fiddes, Sir Richard Solomon, and Mr. Duncan at Pretoria; and by Sir Godfrey Lagden and Mr. Wybergh here—a really surprising amount of ground has been covered. Despite all the difficulties and discouragements of the present time, the machinery of the Government is getting rapidly into working order, and, as soon as normal conditions are restored, the new Colonies will find themselves provided with an Administration capable of dealing with the needs of a great and progressive community, and with efficient and trustworthy Courts of Law. A number of fundamental laws are being worked out, and will shortly be submitted for your approval. In the Orange River Colony they do not involve any great change of system, but, in the Transvaal, some most important reforms are at once necessary, while an immense amount of useless rubbish, which encumbered the statute book and made it the despair of jurists, has already been repealed. . . .

After his return from Natal, Lord Milner was largely occupied with financial business, and preparing statements as to the financial position and prospects of the Transvaal. In enclosing for the information of the Secretary of State a memorandum drawn up by Mr. Duncan, the High Commissioner not only commented on details of expenditure, but also outlined his conception of the financial policy to be pursued in the future (Nov. 8, and Dec. 21, 1901, Milner Papers, XLIV, ii, 5, 7, 8, 9).

He hoped that next year the Transvaal would be rid of "grants in aid." Assuming that railway was kept separate from State finance, he estimated administrative expenditure at £2,200,000, *plus* interest on a debt of £10,000,000, which would have to be provided by a State loan. The figure of £10,000,000 was to include the existing liabilities of the State, estimated at £4,800,000, and something over £5,000,000 for a generous policy of Public Works, Relief, and Resettlement. The interest on this debt at 4 per cent would amount to £400,000 per annum. The difference between 4 per cent and the cheaper rate at which the loan could be raised if guaranteed by the Imperial Government would provide the necessary sinking fund. For "it is," Milner observed, "impolitic for H.M. Government to guarantee any debt of a Colonial Government which is not terminable." To this expenditure was to be added the cost of the South African Constabulary. Milner argued that 6,000 highly trained and well-mounted men would be

sufficient to police the country, and that the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal ought to bear this burden according to their relative capacity, the former contributing one-sixth and the latter five-sixths of the expense. In this case £1,250,000 would have to be added to the Transvaal budget, making it £3,800,000 in all.

Milner thought that there would be no difficulty in raising a revenue of this amount, but no larger, for some years, if approved by H.M. Government. These figures, however, did not include the contribution which the Colony might be called upon to make towards the general expenses of the war. On this subject, Milner made some trenchant observations :

Extract from Despatch. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

21/12/01. . . . Evidently it is not good policy, nor is it the desire of H.M. Government to throw a heavy burden on the Transvaal at the outset, and thereby to check the recovery of the country and the expansion of its Revenue, upon the development of which the possibility of the Transvaal taking over any portion of the British debt depends. Neither is it possible, in view of the conjectural character of all estimates of the future wealth of the Transvaal, *to fix now* the total amount of its contribution, without great risk of either hopelessly outweighing the new Colony, or of charging to it much less than in the event it may prove very well able to bear. It seems to me that the only way to meet these difficulties is to adopt some elastic system, by which the contribution of the Transvaal towards the burdens resting on the British taxpayer, as a consequence of the war, will adjust itself automatically to the taxable capacity of the new Colony. The best way of ensuring this—I admit that I am following an Egyptian precedent, but stripped, as it seems to me, of its objectionable features—would be to provide that the Civil Expenditure of the Transvaal, including interest on debt, should be, in the first instance, fixed at a certain figure, and that any amount by which the Revenue exceeded this fixed figure, plus the Transvaal share of the cost of 6,000 Constabulary—or of a less number if it was found possible to reduce below 6,000—should be divided in definite proportions between Great Britain and the Transvaal Colony. The British share of this surplus would go to the extinction of War debt, the Transvaal share would be free to be devoted to such local purposes as might appear, from time to time, most to demand additional outlay. To some extent, no doubt, the Transvaal share would be absorbed by the gradual increase of Administrative Expenditure above the limit originally fixed. But the bulk of it would probably be devoted to works of public improvement, calculated to develop

the resources of the country. In making this proposal, I assume that the taxation of the Transvaal will be at once revised so as to cover whatever charges, apart from war debt, we shall in future have to bear. There is no difficulty that I can see—if the foregoing estimate of the liabilities of the Transvaal, apart from war debts, is correct—why the country should not be rendered completely solvent in the first year after the bulk of it is tranquillized, and its central industry completely resumed. I do not see why this should not be the case in the next financial year, i.e. that beginning 1st July. But whether this event comes to pass six months or a year sooner or later is not very material. The point is that *the same rate of taxation* necessary to make the Transvaal solvent from the outset, and which need not be an excessive rate, will, unless all estimates of the future development of the country are wholly falsified, ensure in the early future a great and growing surplus. Should all our forecasts be falsified, and the Transvaal prove not to be a country with a great development before it, then, of course, the surpluses will prove a chimera—but in that case Great Britain would not, in fact, be able to get money out of the Transvaal for the extinction of the war debt, whatever arrangements she might have made. In the far more probable case, on the other hand, of an expanding Transvaal revenue, Great Britain, on the plan proposed, will get as much and no more than the Transvaal can perfectly well afford, and get it without imposing on the Colonists any greater burden than that, which they will have been accustomed to from the first, and which will have been imposed in the first instance for their own local requirements. Personally, I have no doubt whatever that the reasonable measure of taxation, which will secure to the Transvaal enough money for its own wants at starting, will yield more than enough for local purposes in subsequent years. But no human being can say *how much more*. Yet it is precisely on this *how much more* that the amount, which the Transvaal may fairly be asked to contribute towards the British debt, depends. For that reason it is desirable that the amount of such contribution should not be arbitrarily settled, but should be allowed to settle itself, as, according to the scheme just outlined, it would do.

Assuming that taxation is properly adjusted to begin with, and is economically sound, then the increase of Revenue will inevitably be in a certain proportion to the increase of wealth, and for that reason will be a fair measure of what may justly be contributed by the Transvaal to the cost of its liberation. I can see technical difficulties in the carrying out of this proposal, but none which a little financial ingenuity could not get over. And the principle appears to me entirely sound. Before entering into

the somewhat lengthy particulars, which would be necessary to develop the idea in a workmanlike manner, it would be desirable to know whether the principle meets with the support of H.M. Government. There are, however, one or two possible objections which may be met even now. In the first place, it would be necessary that, in order to secure, for reduction of war debt, a fair share of the latent mineral wealth of the Transvaal, the proceeds of all sales of *new mining rights* (assuming, as I do, that such rights will, in future, be put up to auction, and not scrambled for) should be carried to revenue. They probably will form a very large part of those future surpluses which, according to the scheme, will be divisible between the Transvaal and Great Britain. In the next place it will, of course, be necessary to put an upward limit either to the total amount of the Transvaal contribution to war debt, or to the number of years during which the proposed arrangement is to last.

There is something to be said for either plan, and it is also possible to combine the two. What would never do, would be to leave the liability of the Transvaal altogether unlimited. It would be an impossibly unpopular arrangement to have the Transvaal permanently under financial obligations to Great Britain. On the contrary, the Colonists ought to feel that every year of prosperity is bringing them nearer to complete financial independence.

It may be thought that, if Great Britain had a claim upon the revenue of the Transvaal over a certain amount, there would be an inclination on the part of the Government or the people of the Transvaal to take no interest in the development of that revenue, and that, when the fixed limit set upon local expenditure was reached, there would be constant clamour to reduce, or attempts to evade, taxation. To this, however, there are three distinct answers. In the first place, the British Government will, during the period of Crown Colony Government, have the matter in its own hands, while, with the establishment of self-government it would, in any case, as long as the Transvaal was its debtor in any form, be obliged to retain a certain measure of financial control. Secondly, the Colonists themselves will, on the present plan, have a strong interest in maintaining the surpluses, as the Colony will itself get a share of these, and it is certain to be wanting money for its own objects. The greater the excess of revenue over fixed expenditure, the more it will have to spend for purposes of local development. Finally, there will be the desire to get rid, as soon as possible, of the incubus of the war debt, and to be free. There is no doubt the further objection that any fixed system of taxation, even if not too

heavy as a whole, may be found in practice to be inconvenient in its incidence, and that the proposed scheme would impose difficulties in the way of any revision of taxation. But this is to assume an unreasonable attitude on the part of Great Britain towards fiscal reform in the Transvaal. I do not think we need assume, that if a good case is made out for such reform, H.M. Government will decline to listen to it. The Colony will not, like Egypt, be under financial obligations to alien Powers, having no interest in its welfare and using such financial control for political purposes. It is inconceivable that the Imperial Government would not be willing to agree to modifications of taxation, which were shown to be for the good of the Colony, as long as the productiveness of taxation as a whole was not thereby impaired.

These ideas were further elaborated in a despatch dated Feb. 8, 1902 (Milner Papers, XLIV, iii, 38).

In addition to these despatches, there was one giving an account of the expenditure of the Mansion House and Imperial Relief Funds for British Refugees (15/11/01) [1]; another on the National Bank (13/12/01) [2]; another, dated the following day, described the organization of relief for returning Refugees, which had proved too big a problem to be handled by a private association.[3] This was accompanied by a report on the working of the "present rudimentary Civil Administration" of the Transvaal (Cd. 903, pp. 169–98). Although greatly restricted by military exigencies, it had, Milner claimed, already produced valuable results and sown seeds which promised a good harvest. "The work," so Milner concluded his despatch, "is being conducted in a hopeful spirit and with a long look ahead. It is a sustaining thought, amidst some discouragements and setbacks at the present time, to realize the great opportunities of the future. We have come into possession of a magnificent estate, which has been woefully mismanaged. As far as local administration is concerned—I am not speaking of the political development of South Africa as a whole—it requires no extraordinary statesmanship, it simply requires ordinary decent Government, and reasonable liberality in public finance, to ensure not only a great advance in material prosperity, but in all the essentials of civilization."

On the same day, Milner despatched a report on the working

[1] Cd. 903, pp. 127–9.

[2] Milner Papers, XLIV, ii, 73.

[3] *Ib.*, XLIV, ii, 81.

of the railways and their future,[1] the result of a conference with Sir Percy Girouard, the Director of Military Railways, who had been selected to control the combined lines of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, when they should come under civil authority. A line had already been laid from Bloemfontein to Sannah's Post, which, he explained, "forms the beginning of the important railway which will ultimately connect the capital of the Orange River Colony with Basutoland and with the rich grain-producing district of that Colony known as the Conquered Territory."

As to railway policy in the future, he concluded: "It seems almost superfluous to argue the case for further railway development in South Africa, and especially in the new Colonies. The richest agricultural districts of both Colonies are far removed from markets. The through lines from the coast to the great centres of industry will be choked with traffic. Both to stimulate agriculture and to facilitate the operations of commerce, additional lines and relief lines will be urgently required. Moreover, if the construction of the most necessary of these is undertaken as fast as the districts through which they pass are pacified, employment will be provided for large numbers of persons, who would otherwise be idle and dependent on Government for relief, as well as many new-comers, who will be a valuable addition to the population of the country. And there is no work which will have a more excellent effect in promoting the pacification of the country. If there is one enterprise which is certain to be thoroughly popular with the old population, it is this. The one thing which the Boers will thoroughly appreciate will be railways bringing their richest lands into touch with the best markets. And the British population will be equally in favour of such a course."

Yet one more despatch bears the date December 14. It describes the organization and good work done by the South African Constabulary and Burgher Police (Cd. 903, pp. 198, 199).

Milner wound up the year with a long report (30/12/01) upon the expenditure of the half-million which had been advanced towards the return and relief of British Refugees, the restoration of the Boer population to their homes, and the introduction of new settlers (Cd. 1163, pp. 81–8). This was supplemented by another account on April 25 (Milner Papers, XLIV, iii, 116). Nor was this the full sum of despatches written during the last months of 1901.

[1] Cd. 903, pp. 196–8.

As early as November, 1900, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society and the Aborigines' Protection Society had approached the Secretary of State with their views upon the treatment and rights of native races. They demanded the abolition of all forced labour as well as of slavery, and a declaration that natives should enjoy the same privileges as were enjoyed by the natives of India. The opening of a new era with the passing of the old Boer Governments, and the new arrangements necessary for the provision of labour for the mines, prompted them to call for a broad and comprehensive declaration of policy upon these difficult questions. It was also urged that Administrators should have a knowledge of native languages.

Chamberlain invited the High Commissioner to report what changes might be necessary to bring the position of natives in the new Colonies into line with their position in the old, "having regard to opinion both in the Colonies and in this country." But full consideration of the problem had to await the establishment of tranquillity and civil control. This was one of the reasons why Milner was anxious to see an end of the military administration. Meanwhile, the penalty of flogging under the Transvaal Pass Law was abolished (July, 1901).[1]

Milner issued in December a series of Proclamations revising the old Pass and Liquor Laws, and regulating the engagement and employment of natives (Dec. 10, 1901). These Proclamations had been drawn up on the advice of the Legal Adviser, Sir Richard Solomon, and the Commissioner of Native Affairs, Sir Godfrey Lagden, and after careful consideration by the Governor and the members of his future Executive Council. The regulations thus introduced were, Milner suggested, a preliminary step in the organization of a system which in its main outlines would prove acceptable (Cd. 904, pp. 1–22).[2] The High Commissioner took the opportunity afforded by the submission of these Proclamations to the Home Government (Dec. 6), to explain, in a despatch of quite exceptional interest, the policy which it was proposed to

[1] When Lord Milner visited South Africa in 1924, this abolition of flogging was made a special ground of attack upon him by the Transvaal Boer Press.

[2] During the following months (Jan.–April) the problems of the registration of aliens, regulation of the liquor traffic, and the registration, location and status of Asiatics with regard to owning lands, were carefully considered and discussed, and the results submitted in despatches to the Secretary of State (Milner Papers, XLIV, iii).

pursue with regard to natives in the new Territories. Whilst agreeing with the Aborigines Society as to the importance of a knowledge of native languages, Milner added the proviso that it would be folly to ignore the many native Administrators whose linguistic attainments were poor, but whose capacity in dealing with natives had proved excellent. He proceeded to lay down several general principles of policy on the Native Question, and to explain the drift of the new Proclamations.

Extract from Despatch. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

6/12/01. . . . As regards the methods of government to be adopted, I am in general agreement (and in saying this I speak also for Sir Godfrey Lagden and the other members of the Administration) with most of the principles laid down in the letters already referred to. That is to say, I agree with the Aborigines' Protection Society that native institutions should not be unnecessarily interfered with; that their existing system of communal tenure and of tribal government, and their traditional customs, as far as they are not in gross conflict with civilized ideas, should be respected; that they should not be compelled by force or induced by fraud to leave their own country for service with white men; and that their taxation should be in proportion to the services rendered and the benefits bestowed upon them by our Government. Finally, I think, though this is not a point specially touched upon by the Society, that much more should be done for the education of the natives than has ever yet been attempted in the Transvaal. I do not mean that they should be educated like Europeans, for their requirements and capacities are very different, but that they should be trained to develop their natural aptitudes for their own good and that of the community. Undoubtedly the greatest benefit that could be bestowed upon them or South Africa generally would be to teach them habits of regular and skilled labour.

So far from sharing the prejudices, which seem to be felt by some of your correspondents, against any form of inducement to the natives to work for whites, I think that, as long as the inducements are legitimate, the more natives that are engaged in mining and other industrial pursuits the better for them and for the country. But while saying this I desire once for all formally to disclaim, on behalf of this Administration, any desire or intention to compel natives to enter into the service of white employers by any means whatever. . . . I return to the more immediately pressing question of the protection and control of the natives voluntarily leaving their homes to enter the service of whites, which is the subject of

the Proclamations just issued. The immediate reform of the existing laws dealing with this matter has been forced upon the Government by the resumption of the mining industry . . . and by the influx of a certain number of native labourers from the North, who are seeking employment on the mines. . . .

It would not be easy to exaggerate the evils of the old system, the confusion, the demoralization, the injustice to natives, and the loss to employers, which formerly made the condition of native labour in the mining areas of the Transvaal a crying scandal, and a constant source of complaint alike to the friends of the natives and the representatives of the mining industry. But it was not so much bad laws which were to blame for this, as very bad administration. The root idea of the old Pass Law was not a wrong one. If aboriginal natives are to come and go in large numbers in search of labour, and to reside for considerable periods in the midst of a white community, there must be some passport system, else the place will be a pandemonium. Alike for the protection of the natives and for the protection of the whites, it is absolutely essential to have some reasonable arrangements by which the incoming native can be identified, and his movements traced. Nor is it unjust, indeed it is necessary, that when he has freely entered into a contract he should be bound to observe the terms of it, just as the other party should be bound to discharge the obligations which by that contract he undertakes towards the native. It was not the Pass Law as a whole (I am not speaking of certain harsh provisions of it, now removed) but the abuses connected with it, and especially the irregular exactions to which the natives were subjected in obtaining and renewing their passes, which made the old system so unfair. And the same remark applies in other directions. The old law did not admit the principle of compulsion, yet in fact natives were in many cases compelled to work on terms not voluntarily or not intelligently accepted by themselves. The Law against supplying natives with liquor was severe, yet an enormous proportion of them were constantly drunk.

The improvement of the laws is therefore merely a first step. It is only sound and honest administration which can make the best of laws of any use. Among the changes at present being introduced I attach perhaps the greatest importance to those provisions which are intended to improve the character of the men having the most intimate dealing with the natives, and to ensure to the Government an effective control of their proceedings. . . . (*After analysing the principal differences between the new system and the old, Milner continued :*) But undoubtedly the greatest benefit which it is in the power of the Government to confer, alike upon mine owner and native, is the suppression of the illicit drink traffic. But this more than anything

else depends, not on the terms of the law, but on its administration. In the Proclamation dealing with this matter, which forms one of the series recently sent to you, we have taken over the principle of total prohibition embodied in the legislation of the late Government. Indeed, the new law on this point differs from the old in no important particular, except that the penalties for supplying natives with drink are rendered more severe, and especially that no option of a fine is allowed. Experience has conclusively proved that the illicit liquor dealers laughed at even a heavy fine. They were generally agents of wealthy principals, who could not themselves be got at, and who, making enormous profits out of the demoralization of the native, could easily afford to pay the fines inflicted upon those who worked for them. I admit that the penalties now imposed are of great severity; but then we have to deal with an evil of great magnitude.

There is no doubt that the new administration has before it a severe struggle with one of the most powerful, as it is one of the most degraded, agencies, for making money by the corruption of one's fellow-creatures. For such a conflict it ought to be armed with the strongest weapons. I do not indeed believe that, even if it is so armed, the victory will be easy. The fact that we have hitherto achieved a large measure of success causes me no illusions. It may be the case, as a leading mining man told me the other day, that the heaviest expenses caused to the mines now working, by the conditions of war time, are more than compensated by the greater sobriety of their native labourers, the extent of which he illustrated by saying that while in old times the mines which he represented always reckoned upon at least 15 per cent. on the average of their natives being incapacitated by drink, they now had only 1 per cent.

This, if correct, is excellent as far as it goes, but we must not forget that the number of natives at present at work is probably not more than a tenth of what it will be when normal conditions are restored, and that it is far easier to tackle the problem with 10,000 natives working on the mines, than with 100,000. Moreover, we have exceptional advantages at present for dealing with the "undesirables" who live by this nefarious traffic, which will not exist when martial law is removed, and when the influx of population is no longer controllable. The real fight has got to come, and it will be a great fight. All I can say is that the Administration is thoroughly alive to the momentous importance of the question, and that it has the public opinion of the respectable majority of the European inhabitants solid at its back. The real difficulty of course is, that in the control of the liquor traffic the Government has to employ hundreds of agents, and the profit

to be derived from making natives drunk is so enormous that every one of these agents will be exposed to bribes, and very big bribes. But while I realize the difficulties, I also feel that we are bound, by hook or by crook, to overcome them. The whole credit of this administration is at stake in the matter, and I feel confident that H.M. Government will support us in the view that no effort and no expense should be spared in carrying out a policy which, if successful, will mean a momentous triumph for civilization in this part of the world. . . .

The last point to which I need refer is the Proclamation giving power to the Commissioner for Native Affairs to exempt coloured persons of a higher degree of civilization than the mass of the aboriginal natives from the provisions of the Pass Law. It is necessary that the law itself should apply to coloured persons, as a body, for it would be neither desirable nor practicable to throw upon Pass officers and policemen the difficult and often impossible task of distinguishing between one coloured man and another, and saying who was, or who was not, a "native." But on the other hand it is clear that the reasons which exist for compelling the bulk of coloured persons to be supplied with passes or passports in going hither and thither at a distance from their homes, are not applicable to those coloured persons who, like the better class of Cape boys, conform in their habits and conduct to civilized standards, and are much further removed from the raw Kaffir than they are from the European. You will remember that one of the most troublesome controversies between H.M. Government and the late Government of the Transvaal arose out of the oppressive treatment of Cape boys under the pass system. It is true that it was not so much the system itself, as the scandalous abuses practised under it by certain Transvaal officials, against which we protested. At the same time the course of the controversy illustrated the necessity, which was finally acknowledged even by the Transvaal Government, of making some distinction in law between the treatment of coloured persons of a superior degree of civilization and that of the ordinary native. This principle is now embodied in the Proclamation under discussion, which empowers the Commissioner for Native Affairs to grant certificates of exemption to such coloured persons as may appear entitled to them, irrespective of race, which certificates will exempt them from the necessity of taking out passes or passports. It is the intention of the Government to interpret this concession liberally, so that all respectable coloured persons may be free from unnecessary inconvenience. And the Proclamation provides that the exemption, which at present only applies to the Pass Law, may in future be extended to other laws, should there be such, which may be necessary for the protection and

control of the bulk of the Kaffir population, but are not required in the case of civilized coloured men.[1] . . .

Generally speaking, I claim for the Native Code which we are trying to introduce, and of which these Proclamations are the first instalment, that it is conceived in the best interests of the natives, and that any restrictions imposed on their personal liberty do not go beyond what is necessary, not only for the protection of the white population, but for the good of the natives themselves. Moreover, the control which it is proposed to exercise over the natives, is so devised as to improve and not degrade them. As far as possible also, regard has been paid to laws on the same subject existing in other British Colonies in South Africa. The need of uniformity of policy on native questions is generally recognized, and, while it will probably be reserved for a Federal Parliament to frame a Native Code for all South Africa, it is incumbent on the authorities of the several States to do nothing in the meanwhile, which will make that desirable consummation more difficult of attainment. As compared with the old Transvaal law, the present measures are undoubtedly, in this respect, a step in the right direction.

In conclusion, I ought to say that the Administration, in framing the present measures, have had the benefit of the advice of leading colonists, thoroughly familiar with the intricacies of the old Pass Law, and with the difficulties presented by the regulation of native labour. And we have derived the greatest assistance from them. While sympathizing with the objects of the Anti-Slavery Society and the Aborigines' Protection Society, I cannot too earnestly protest against the tone of unjustified suspicion, and almost hostility towards their fellow-countrymen in South Africa, running through the letters of 9th November, 1900, and 11th January, 1901, a tone which vitiates and weakens their advocacy of the cause of the natives. Most especially would I raise a warning voice against the fatal doctrine that the Imperial Government is to deal with the native question regardless of colonial sentiment. That doctrine, absurdly enough, is often preached in the very quarters where there is the loudest demand for the immediate complete self-government of the new territories. I believe that such immediate self-government is absolutely impracticable, but for that very reason I am anxious that the Imperial authorities, being obliged for a

[1] Mr. H. Ramsay Collins, Editor of the *Natal Mercury*, whose opinion Milner valued highly, had suggested, on the occasion of a petition from the Indian Community at Durban for permission for a small number of Indians to return to the Transvaal at this juncture, that he should discuss the question with Mr. Nazâr, who, with Gandhi, was the representative of the Indians in South Africa. Milner accepted this idea.

time to deal autocratically with the affairs of the colonists, should show, not less, but more regard for colonial sentiment. To run counter to it, will not only lead to the estrangement of the colonies, but it will react most injuriously upon the natives, whenever—and the time must come before many years—native and all other local affairs pass under local control. Moreover, it is a complete mistake to think that the Imperial authorities cannot do their duty by the natives without coming into conflict with colonial sentiment, always provided that they bear in mind that they have also a duty to the whites. The best colonial sentiment in this matter is not far removed from the best home sentiment, as represented for instance by temperate and reasonable advocates of native rights, such as the contributors to the collection of valuable and well-informed essays, recently published by the "Native Races Committee." And the two points of view tend more and more to approximate to one another. On the one hand, there is now a better appreciation at home of the difficulties confronting the colonists, and of the impracticability of governing natives, who, at best, are children, needing and appreciating a just paternal government, on the same principles as apply to the government of full-grown men. On the other hand, there is an increasing recognition on the part of the colonists of the heavy responsibility involved in the government of a vast native population, and of the duty and necessity of raising them in the scale of civilization. But this hopeful process of approximation would be utterly upset if the Imperial Government were to approach this delicate question in the prejudiced and ill-informed spirit which seems to animate many well-meaning people at home, but which would be justly resented by the whole of white South Africa, including those men who are most active in the defence of native rights.

This remark applies especially to the question of native labour. According to the Anti-Slavery Society, while the treatment of the natives by the Boers in the Transvaal "is well known to have been utterly lacking in humanity, their treatment by British colonists, it is to be feared, has not been, in practice, much better," for "the native . . . has been exploited for the purpose of obtaining cheap labour, and condemned to a lot which is one of oppression and servitude." And the Aborigines' Protection Society, while it does not level against the whole European population of this Colony an accusation quite so reckless, is evidently haunted by the fear that the Government can be made the catspaw of the mining industry, to procure labourers for them by compulsion, and to arbitrarily reduce the rate of wages.

I can only say that, whatever ill-considered remarks on this

subject may at times be thrown out at shareholders' meetings, the leaders of the mining industry in this country have never made the faintest suggestion that the Government of the Colony should do any such thing. The idea that the Government should obtain labourers for them by compulsion or otherwise, or that they should use their power to fix the rate of wages, has never even been hinted to me. Of course, the employers of labour in the Transvaal, whether farmers or mine owners, desire, like all other employers in the world, to obtain labour as cheaply as possible, though they would be sanguine indeed if they expected ever to get unskilled Kaffir labour for the wages which would be joyfully accepted by unskilled labourers in many European countries. And if, by combination among themselves, they can prevent those wages from being forced up to a preposterous pitch, cramping not only industry, but agriculture, it may well be doubted whether their action would not be beneficial rather than otherwise to the whole community, not excepting the natives themselves.

But, in any case, it is no business of the Government's to interfere in the matter, nor have the mine owners suggested that it should be. What they *do* ask is, that the Government should do what it can to prevent the natives, whom they have obtained at a great cost, and whose interests are safeguarded by the law in so many ways, from breaking away from their contracts in a mere access of childish levity, or being tempted away by unprincipled labour thieves. And this is surely a reasonable demand. If the Government has a duty towards the native, and should see to it that his engagement is voluntary, that faith is kept with him, and that proper provisions are made for his health and comfort, it has also a duty to his employer, and to the whole white population, whose well-being is in a hundred ways so deeply affected by the prosperity of the mines. It will be none the worse for the natives, indeed it will be all the better for them, if, while jealously protecting native interests, the Government are also animated by a spirit of fairness and friendliness to the great industry—built up by the skill, the science, the indefatigable labours, the enterprise undaunted by official bullying and discouragement, of thousands of our fellow-countrymen and other Europeans—upon the continued progress of which the welfare of the Transvaal, and indeed of all South Africa for at least a century, will mainly depend.

In reply to a letter from the Dean of Pietermaritzburg, Milner formulated his views as to the political and social rights of the Native Population :

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to the Rev. James Green, Dean of Pietermaritzburg.

12/12/01. . . . I am exceedingly sensible of the greatness of the responsibility under which I labour in having to take many steps, both as regards the Native and other fundamental questions, without the support of a regular Government representative of the people behind me. And I am the more anxious on that account to have the benefit of the [advice] of people like yourself, who are specially qualified by ability and long experience to give it. . . . One thing which appears to me quite evident is, that a distinction must be drawn in the case of the Natives between personal and political rights. A political equality of white and black is impossible, though I do think that in any South African Parliament the interests of the blacks should be specially represented. Perhaps this could be best done by white men, not elected but nominated for that particular purpose. The Imperial Government might reserve a right of such nomination, at any rate at first. As regards personal rights, I hold that those of the Natives should be just as clearly defined, and just as sacred as those of the white men. I do not, however, think that they need always be, or ought always to be the same. This does not apply to the protection of person and property against injury (broadly speaking to Criminal Law) where I can see no ground for difference. But in the matter of civil rights, there are many differences that must exist, at any rate for a time. I think the natives themselves would be most unwilling if, for instance, we were to apply European laws of land tenure to their tribal lands. . . . As regards military defence, I entirely agree with you that the Natives could be more utilized than they are, especially in Police work. The purely Native Police in Basutoland are a very great success. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson.

15/2/02. . . . Have you seen a very striking pamphlet issued by the South African Temperance Alliance containing the reports of Magistrates as to the effect of the restrictions on the sale of intoxicating liquor to natives? . . . It seems to me to be of great importance from two points of view. In the first place it shows that there is a good side, and a very good side, as well as the bad side we know so well; and secondly, it is the strongest possible argument in favour of the policy of total prohibition. As you know, we are going in for total prohibition up here, and I hope in time to see it extended to all South Africa. It is worth while making the most we can of so good an illustration as this paper affords of the benefit of keeping drink away from the natives

altogether. I am not sure that I should apply this to Kaffir beer consumed in their own kraals. But my mind is not made up on this point.

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

30/12/01. . . . As regards the camps, I am glad to see the last returns are a little better. I shall not be happy until you can inform me that some of them have been broken up and considerable numbers of their inmates sent to other camps or dispersed. In connection with this, I have pressed you to make a beginning, however small, in planting out some of the farmers within the protected area. I quite appreciate your objections and I am prepared to yield to them ; at the same time I cannot overestimate the political importance of making a beginning. A practical indication of our policy, such as would be given by the spectacle of a certain number of the best behaved and most trustworthy prisoners being replaced on the land, would, I think, have a great effect upon the others, and would give us some valuable experience. I am anxious about the future when it becomes necessary to bring back the prisoners. There is no doubt it must be done gradually, and I should like to think that it would be possible for those who return first to find some of their countrymen already established and working with the Government. . . . You do not say how you are getting on yourself. I hope that the extra secretarial assistance that you now have is relieving you of some of your detail. Please remember that I am ready to approve of further help in this direction, or in any other that you can suggest as tending to leave your mind free for the larger work of settling principles. Do not hesitate to ask for anything or anybody that will strengthen your hands. . . .

In spite of the additional Secretaries to whom Mr. Chamberlain refers above, the preparation of these despatches by Milner, in addition to an enormous amount of letter-writing, brought on an attack of writer's cramp. For the next few months he wrote his *Diary* entirely with his left hand, and dictated letters and despatches to shorthand writers. Milner was never slow to acknowledge the help, strenuous, devoted and ungrudging, which he received from his Staff, as well as from those who worked with him in inaugurating the new Administrations.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

6/4/02. . . . I am exceedingly lucky in some of the principal officials—Solomon, Duncan, Davidson. Lagden, too, works splen-

didly. . . . In the Orange River Colony, Goold-Adams and Wilson continue a great success. The education, under Sargant, is going like a house on fire everywhere. Sargant has no idea of red tape—too little—but he is a genius as an educationalist, and worth his weight in gold. Thanks to your kindness, I have also some excellent Private Secretaries. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir F. M. Ommanney,[1] *G.C.M.G.*

11/1/02. [VERY CONFIDENTIAL] . . . No other lawyer of equal ability has Sir Richard Solomon's comprehensive knowledge of South African laws and conditions. . . . He is popular, quick, adaptable, always ready to do his best for every colleague who wants his advice, never fussing over formalities or trivialities, never thinking of his own " position." Last, but not least, he has perfect health and stupendous industry. In addition to all the immense mass of statutes which in less than a year he has repealed, revised, or prepared, to the organization of his own office, and the Magisterial service, to advising all Departments of the Government on the innumerable points of law cropping up in the present chaos—in addition to all this he has been simply invaluable to Lord Kitchener (who, I think, would be prepared to entirely endorse what I say) and has greatly assisted in keeping Martial Law within some sort of bounds. . . .

But in spite of the notable progress which was actually being made, Milner was increasingly dissatisfied with his position. He was hampered by the necessary continuation of the military dictatorship, which deprived him of any control of transport and materials. He was " weather-bound and paralysed by military policy." " I cannot get any further in the way of settlement," he wrote to a friend in March. " It is a very difficult business at the best, and one cannot do it, if one has not supreme control." He began to feel anxious lest, when the war was over, the dual regime might continue, and lest the civil authority should not have a free hand in the business of resettlement and repatriation (Letter to Chamberlain, 6/4/02, Milner Papers, XLI, iii, 2).

For these reasons he resisted pressure from the Home Government for the publication of the Letters Patent,[2] constituting him Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, which he had brought with him from England. This would bring regular Civil Government and the High Court of Justice into existence at once. Milner thought that neither would

[1] Permanent Under-Secretary, Colonial Office. [2] Cd. 1163, pp. 15–35.

have a fair chance, if they started life under a military despotism (Letter to Mr. Haldane, 8/12/01). Meanwhile a temporary High Court was created for dealing with civil business only.[1]

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

2/12/01. . . . I think there are very strong reasons against bringing the Letters Patent into operation immediately, and the strongest of them applies to both Colonies equally. It is that, while the country is virtually under military dictatorship it is undesirable to give the civil authorities the semblance of power without the substance of it. The Governments of the two Colonies will require all the prestige with which it is possible to invest them to carry them through the difficult but necessary period, during which they will have to bear the whole responsibility of administration, little if at all assisted by representatives of the people. But they would make a bad start indeed, if they were to begin their career with a delusive appearance of authority, rendering them liable to be blamed for many things for which they were not in any way responsible. At present there are considerable areas in which there is no vestige of any but military (authority). I know no more about what is going on there than I do about China. And even in these districts, where the ordinary civil business is in civil hands, the sanction of the military authorities has to be obtained for many administrative acts, and the civil power is liable at any moment to be over-ruled or interfered with (I do not complain of this. I think it inevitable under the circumstances, and wish expressly to say that the Commander-in-Chief is anxious not to interfere with civil government more than the exigencies of war seem to him to demand). . . . I do not want to start the permanent High Court, on the dignity and respect for which so much will depend, until it is in a position to assert its authority without being overshadowed by stronger tribunals operating side by side with it. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

12/3/02. [SECRET AND PERSONAL] . . . I am at least as anxious as you are to see the civil administration substituted for the military dictatorship, but, as you yourself say, the latter seems to be necessary, and it is impossible for me here to attempt to put a limit to it. . . . On the whole I see nothing for it but patience and a stiff upper lip, but I would beg of you not to be discouraged, and in spite of difficulties to press forward on every possible

[1] Milner to Chamberlain 17 and 19/1/02; Milner Papers, XLIV, iii, 19 and 43.

occasion your schemes of resettlement and recultivation, as well as of developing the mining industries. If we can only get decent Boers on their farms again, I should think that they might be relied upon at least to defend themselves against any stray invaders. . . .

Amongst many tokens of sympathy and appreciation which Lord Milner received from admirers in Canada and Australia at this period, was the present of an Australian opossum rug, brought to him by Mr. W. N. Willis with an address from members of the State Parliament of New South Wales, expressing "their appreciation of Lord Milner's distinguished ability, imperial capacity, and indomitable will in keeping together that portion of the King's Dominions over which, for the safety of Britons, and for the safety of the Empire, to our good fortune you preside" (Milner Papers, XXXVIII, i, 28).

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to N. Barnet.

6/3/02. . . . I was greatly pleased to get your letter and to learn from it that I have so many friends in Australia. British South Africans feel doubly grateful for the assistance which Australia has rendered and is rendering to us in this great struggle. I hope it may result in drawing Australia and British South Africa closer together, and in strengthening the bonds which unite all parts of the Empire. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. James Craig, Toronto.

6/3/02. . . . It has been a great encouragement to us during this long struggle to have the sympathy of British Canadians over and above the invaluable help which Canadian soldiers have given to the army in the field. I am glad that my views, as expressed at the Johannesburg banquet (p. 319), met with your approval and that of like-thinking men. You may be sure that I shall do whatever in me lies to prevent the blood and treasure, which Great Britain and Canada and the whole Empire have expended for the establishment of the British Dominion in South Africa, from being wasted. . . .

The death, in April, 1902, of Mrs. Nathaniel Montefiore, who, though not of his blood or race, had, since the death of his own parents, spelt home and home love for Milner, was a terrible grief in the midst of all less personal anxieties. He had been kept informed of the progress of her illness by daily cablegrams.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mrs. Chapin.

26/1/02. . . . I read Mr. F. C. Adams's lecture on Lee with the deepest interest—not only for its fascinating narrative of a great historic scene, but on account of its extraordinary appositeness. Alas! We have had no man like Lee on the stage in the present drama, indeed one of the most depressing features is the total absence of great men. The Boers have been particularly poor in them. . . . They have had no great leaders, either military or political. Fine, plucky guerilla chieftains, full of courage, resource, endurance—but no strategist and no statesman—above all, no man with a great soul like Lee. And so the miserable business drags on to the end. Of the future I am not unhopeful. I don't expect to get through personally without a smash—not physical, I think, for I am well—but political. One will make oneself impossibly unpopular if one does one's duty. All revolutions of this vast chaotic sort *consume* their authors. But as long as I can get things *fairly started*, I don't mind. . . .

On Jan. 8, 1902, Lord Milner made his first public pronouncement in the new Colonies. The occasion was a banquet given by the Town Council, Chamber of Mines, and Chamber of Commerce at Johannesburg, under the chairmanship of Mr. W. St. John Carr, and attended by some 250 representatives of commerce, industry, and the Administration.

The speech was worthy of the occasion. It was inspired by the vision, the quiet strength and self-restraint, and conveys something of the indefinable charm characteristic of the speaker.

Milner began by referring to the losses through the war in the ranks of Johannesburg—of some of the best known, some of the most respected, the most beloved, men of ability, of character, of great public spirit, as well as many others less conspicuous, but not less admirable in their courage and devotion, whose graves were scattered over South Africa. He spoke of the hopeful spirit which was beginning to prevail, born of the conviction that the storm-cloud had burst. Only a post-Majuba settlement, with the old political dualism could ever again lead South Africa up to a similar disaster. There were those who were working for such a settlement, but Great Britain would have none of it.

" The pro-Boers," he said, " make a great noise ; they encourage the enemy ; they give support to the campaign of calumny with which we are assailed in foreign countries. At Home they darken counsel ; they may even to some extent weaken action ; but they

produce no durable and effective impression upon British public opinion, which remains as sound as ever on South African questions —hating the war, regretting but recognizing its necessity, determined not to be cheated of its results. Of course, there are moments of despondency—can it be wondered at under the circumstances?—and the friends of the enemy play upon them for all they are worth. One of their genial devices is to pretend that the war is never coming to an end unless we go on our knees to the enemy and ask them to stop. The war will end all the quicker if we rely simply on steady pressure without fidgeting about negotiations. It is no use to wheedle; the only thing is imperturbably to squeeze, and to keep our clemency and our conciliation—both excellent qualities in their place—for the Boers who surrendered, instead of lavishing our blandishments on those who still continue to fight."

He did not believe in the terrible future which these prophets of evil foretold for South Africa, as they had done for Egypt. There was nothing insoluble in the problems before them, "providing that the people of the Empire retain the same clearness of sight with regard to South African matters as they have already shown patience and resolution. The danger of our getting in a muddle is not here; the danger is on the other side, and it consists in this, that the people at Home may not see South African matters in their true proportions. I say deliberately the people at Home, for I see no similar tendency in our great sister Colonies. Their strong common-sense patriotism is a great stand-by, not only in the field of battle. But then they have no pro-Boers to bemuse them. The worst and most dangerous of all the disservices which that party has rendered to our country is that by their eternal clamour they keep the thoughts of their countrymen with regard to South Africa in one particular rut. They will never convert them to pro-Boerism, but they do make the figure of the Boer loom too large in the British imagination. "Will this form of settlement conciliate the Boer or will that form of settlement conciliate him better? Such and such a policy may be all very well, but will it annoy the Boers?" Morning, noon, and night, it is Boers, Boers, Boers. But what of all the rest of South African humanity? What of the people of Natal? What of the people of Rhodesia? What of the loyalists of the Cape, including the Dutch loyalists, who feel very bitterly that, with the tendency to take sham loyalty for true coin, the existence of some true coin is apt to be forgotten? What, after all, of this little place? And what of those of our enemies

who have come over to our side, and no inconsiderable number of whom are actually fighting for us to-day in order to bring peace to their country? Are we forgetful of the necessity of doing nothing which can possibly put them in the wrong? Of course, it is needless to say that the moment the Boer surrenders, the pro-Boer takes no further interest in him whatsoever. His interest, his affection, is entirely centred in the Boers who are still fighting and in their dependents; but as a nation we really cannot indulge this high degree of altruism at the expense of our friends. I do not mean to say that a man ought to allow himself to be led even by his friends. A great politician once said: "Any man can stand up to his opponents; give me the man who has the courage to stand up to his friends," and there is a deep truth in that. But he did not say: "Give me the man who leaves his friends out of account." It would be absurd to suppose that the people of Great Britain do not care about the loyalists of South Africa. Never has any country made such tremendous sacrifices for a small and distant section of its people. But the people of Great Britain may possibly be tempted, taking for granted the attachment of the South African loyalists, to think too exclusively in the immediate future about winning over those who have opposed them. That would be a great mistake, and it would be a gratuitous mistake, because the bulk of South African Britishers are themselves conciliatory in their attitude. They do not want to eat the Boers. They are perfectly aware that they must remain an important element, though they will no longer be the dominant element. . . . There is a total misapprehension on the part of those who tell us that what we have to do is to hold the balance even between the anti-British party and the anti-Dutch party. There is no anti-Dutch party in South Africa, and there never has been. There is a pro-British party, including 99 per cent. of the British and of the better class of Americans and Europeans, and a considerable number of the Dutch, and there is an anti-British party, including the rest of the Dutch, and the international riff-raff. And the true policy of Great Britain is to encourage and work through the British party, including—yes, most decidedly including—those of our former enemies who have honestly and wholeheartedly thrown in their lot with us, or who may yet do so, and thereby add to the attractiveness of that party for the waverers on the other side; and the wrong policy is to sow distrust in the British party and especially the Dutch converts to it by playing up to the irrecon-

cilables. That is teaching the worst of all lessons, the lesson that it pays better to fight Great Britain to the last gasp than to agree with her in reason."

Milner then turned to consider the future of Johannesburg, and exhorted the leaders of the community to devote themselves to its development as a Municipality.

" The abundance of room, the brilliant air, the open surrounding country of great natural beauty and fertility, still unspoilt, and capable of almost infinite improvement, with these natural resources of climate, of soil, and of scenery ; with your extraordinary wealth, and with a vigorous, enterprising, and now liberated people—it would be a strange failure indeed if this did not become a city to live in, a city to be proud of, one of the great cities of the world. But no Government can achieve this for you—though a bad Government might prevent it. The citizens of Johannesburg have got to achieve it for themselves. . . . The making of a great municipality is enough to attract any ambition, but in this case the government of the municipality involves questions of the highest politics. For a Great Johannesburg—great not only in the number but in the character of its inhabitants, in their intelligence, their cultivation, their public spirit—means a British Transvaal. A British Transvaal will turn the scale in favour of a British South Africa, and a British South Africa may go a long way to consolidate the British Empire. That, and all that, is involved in the details, sometimes dull details, of your municipal life, in your water supply, your tramways, your parks, your schools, in your attaining for yourselves the full equipment of the highest standard of civilized life.

" If I might be permitted to give my advice to the people of Johannesburg, I should say to them : ' Pitch your ideal sufficiently high from the outset ; go for a big thing. Don't be content with shabby makeshifts or temporary expedients ; don't be content with anything less than making this a model city—a city built for permanence, fully equipped with all the essentials of health, comfort, and of culture, not only for the few, but for the great bulk of its inhabitants.' But now, I don't want you to think that because I live in Johannesburg myself, and see what can be made of it, I therefore wish to aggrandize this place, at the expense of other places, of Pretoria for instance, or of the great growing towns of the coast colonies, of Rhodesia, or of Natal. My duty is to all South Africa. I shall never cease to preach against particularism, to exhort, not to any local, but to a South African patriotism.

But this is precisely a case in which the growth of one does not damage, but on the contrary, advantages, all the others. That is the beauty of the situation. The prosperity which flows from here enriches all South Africa, and not its towns only but the country —that great, neglected, under-populated, under-cultivated country, the interests of which must always lie at the heart of any decent Government, and which certainly requires more direct assistance to make the most of itself than is required by a place like this with its immense original resources."

CHAPTER IX

The Peace of Vereeniging[1]

March 7–May 31, 1902

THE steady attrition of the Boer forces by Kitchener's drives and blockhouse system had now brought the end of the war in sight. The determined resistance offered by the Boers was degenerating into irreconcilable obstinacy or mere brigandage. It had ceased to be either magnificent or war. Peace terms had been broached in the autumn by M. Edouard Lippert, the original Dynamite concessionaire under the Kruger regime. After conferences with the Boer representatives in Holland, he had come to England in August, 1901. There he had been in touch with Labouchere and other prominent pro-Boers, and had submitted to Rosebery proposals for a treaty of peace based on an amnesty to Cape rebels, the dismissal of the High Commissioner, and lavish expenditure on the re-establishment of the Boer farmers (Milner Papers, XXXVIII, i, 30). At the beginning of the New Year, a formal offer of mediation was made by Holland (Jan. 25). It was accompanied by the suggestion that the Boer representatives in Europe should proceed to South Africa to consult with the leaders there. The British Government, whilst flatly declining any outside interference, did not absolutely negative the idea of a safe conduct for such envoys, if they applied for it. But they made it evident that they felt that any overtures should be made by the Boers in South Africa in the first instance.[2] There, as Brodrick informed Kitchener (1/2/02), they were to be considered by the Commander-

[1] The following account is based on Lord Milner's *Diary*; copies of cables in the Milner Papers, XLIX, iv, and MS. notes of the Conference with the Boer representatives, XLIX, v. The most important printed accounts are in Cd. 1096; "*The Times* History of the War in South Africa," V, 565–96; Sir G. Arthur, "Life of Lord Kitchener," II; C. de Wet, "Three Years War" (Appendix); and the Rev. J. D. Kestell, "Through Shot and Flame," the author of which acted as Secretary for the Free State during the negotiations.

[2] Cd. 906.

in-Chief and High Commissioner, and afterwards forwarded to London for the decision of the Cabinet.

Extract from Telegram. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

30/1/02. [SECRET AND PERSONAL] . . . Pay no attention to rumours of negotiations. I think that nothing will come of the present indirect overtures, but if matter goes further, H.M. Govt. have decided that any negotiations must be conducted in S. Africa. Inform Kitchener confidentially.

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

20/1/02. . . . I am very sorry to hear that your strength is still overtaxed, although I can hardly be surprised at it. Once more I beg to impress upon you that I am ready and anxious to give you any assistance that you may ask for. . . . I do not know whether the strain which you indicate affects your view of the situation, but in any case we are much more optimistic here than you appear to be. The Session has opened, and on the whole, I think, we are stronger than ever. You will have seen the outburst of feeling in connection with the German attacks upon our troops and race. The movement of indignation has been irresistible, and no doubt has strengthened us materially. I am not in the least afraid of anything that our opponents can do. . . . As far as I can learn the representatives of the Boers in this country and in Holland are almost in despair. They know that the game is up, and although they may not openly say so, they have practically admitted their defeat. You will have seen that the Colonies are playing up splendidly, backing our policy and that of the Government, which is indeed the same. This is a great moral help to us, and the Opposition do not like to run counter to the opinion so clearly expressed by the Colonial press and Governments. . . . I share your disappointment that the military will not allow you more freedom with regard to land settlement. I do not see, however, that they can retain the *non-possumus* attitude much longer. With every extension of the protected area it ought to be possible to restore some of the farms. We do not want to have to do this work all at once in a great hurry. It is most desirable that when the prisoners come back they may find a number of their countrymen already settled and peaceably working under the Government. As regards the future, I do not think there is any influential opinion in favour of approaching the Boers, or indeed of anything but unconditional surrender, although many men dislike the particular words used to describe an inevitable result. There seems to be a flavour of mediæval cruelty about uncon-

ditional surrender from which we shrink, but after all they mean the same thing as we do, and they would bitterly resent any concession that might be misunderstood or would leave any chance for a revival of contest hereafter. I hope there will be no negotiations except such negotiations between the military commanders as may precede a general laying down of arms; but in any case you may rely upon me to refuse any terms which seem to me likely to embarrass us hereafter. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

31/1/02. . . . The Boers as a fighting force are quite done for. . . . The best proof of this is that all the pro-Boers are once more loudly shrieking for "negotiations." Of course there is nothing they hate like the idea of the enemy being *simply conquered* and giving in, like other beaten people. We are at all costs to have *terms*—to be a source of embarrassment hereafter. . . . The stories of differences between Lord Kitchener and me are subsiding, I think. . . . The differences are there—not personal but political. . . . I do admire him in his own line. He is fearfully wrong-headed sometimes, but he is always *homme sérieux*, practising himself, and enforcing upon others, the highest standard of *workmanlike* strenuousness, indefatigable industry and iron perseverance. Great qualities these in a wishy-washy world. . . .

During the next few weeks, General Rawlinson succeeded in capturing the greater part of De Wet's commando, and some of the leaders in the field began to make secret inquiries as to terms of peace. But the flames of war flared up again in the western Transvaal, where De la Rey defeated Methuen's column at Tweebosch (March 7), and captured the wounded General (Cd. 967).

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir H. McCallum.

JOHANNESBURG. 21/3/02. . . . Methuen's disaster. I entirely agree with you as to the imbecility of not promptly publishing a rational account of this, or of any other reverse. The truth is always much less serious than the rumours which get about owing to the suppression of the truth, and it looks as if we were mightily upset by any disaster, if we are afraid to mention it. But I have so often expressed this opinion in vain that I am never going to refer to the matter again, especially as I know it would be perfectly useless. . . .

In answer to Methuen's defeat, a great drive was planned for clearing the Western Transvaal. But at this moment negotiations were opened which, after running a strange and devious course,

were destined to end in peace. The way, indeed, had been opened by the offer of the Dutch Government, and the admirable diplomatic use to which it was turned. For Lord Lansdowne, in rejecting the mediation of Holland, and yet not definitely refusing a safe conduct to the Boer delegates, had indicated that, as full powers of government and negotiation were vested in President Steyn and Acting-President Schalk Burger, direct communication between them and Lord Kitchener would lead to the quickest results. Kitchener was instructed to forward a copy of that correspondence to the Transvaal Government. No comment or suggestion accompanied it. But the Boers were not slow to see that it gave them the opportunity they desired (March 7).

Schalk Burger asked for, and was granted a safe conduct through the British lines, in order to confer with the Free State Government as to proposals for peace.[1] Some days elapsed before the members of the Boer Governments, widely scattered at the different points of their commands, could gather in conference at Klerksdorp (April 9). On the following day they decided to request Kitchener to meet them, in order to receive from them a "proposal of peace." They were invited to Pretoria, where they were entertained with every mark of consideration. Kitchener acquainted Brodrick with these proceedings (April 10), and added that he gathered that "the Transvaalers were for peace, the Free Staters for war." Meanwhile his assembled columns were launched upon a critical campaign in the Western Transvaal under (General) Sir Ian Hamilton.

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

9/4/02. [SECRET AND PERSONAL] . . . Although I am considered to be, and am in fact, optimistic in all matters connected with South Africa, it is impossible not to be a little depressed at the extraordinary ill-luck which has attended us throughout. . . . I had hoped that as one district was cleared the blockhouse system would be moved forward and the new line garrisoned by men taken from an older and more extended one, so that in effect we should require less men instead of more. I had also hoped that it would be found possible to establish at least one *corps d'élite* who would beat the Boers at their own game and follow up a leader like Delarey or De Wet until they had killed or captured him. . . . We are told that this has been done, but nothing has resulted from it. . . . Although I am firmly convinced that we must fight the business out to a finish, I am disappointed that the results have

[1] March 12, Cd. 1096.

not been more conclusive and more quickly attained. I imagine before this reaches you that the peace negotiations—if that is the right name for them—will have been undertaken and probably concluded. . . . Personally I believe, as I always have done, that anything short of unconditional surrender will be most dangerous and may lead to further trouble ; but this is not the opinion of everyone, and unless the issue was clear and supported by strong argument, we should be seriously attacked if we allowed the negotiations to go off on what could with any show of reason be alleged to be an insufficient cause. I hope we may not be placed in this position, but I am not without anxiety. Money alone ought certainly not to be an obstacle to peace. Amnesty is more difficult, but as I do not suppose that in any case we should wish to press hardly upon the rebels who have fought fairly, but should probably, even after an unconditional surrender, give to them their lives and property, it seems to me possible to agree beforehand to such an amnesty, subject, however, to disfranchisement for life in the case of all who have committed acts contrary to the practice of civilized warfare. We might also make an exception against those, who have damaged or looted private property, and who might be subjected to a fine in part payment of the compensation for damage, which otherwise will fall upon the Colony or the owners. We might give the most positive assurances as to our intentions in regard to ultimate colonial self-government, but it seems to me that it would be impossible, and in any case most dangerous to fix an exact date when free institutions should come into operation. In all these matters we must, I am convinced, take Colonial opinion into account, and if it is in any way possible, I shall try to secure the opinions of those Colonies that have assisted us, before a final decision is arrived at. I do not of course admit that they have a right to decide for us, but we ought to know their views. . . .

Telegram. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

25/3/02. In submitting any proposals for peace that may be made by the Boers, I should be glad if you can communicate at the same time views taken of them by Cape and Natal Governments.

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

10/4/02. [URGENT. SECRET] . . . Kitchener has just informed me that Boer leaders are going to write and ask him for an interview to discuss matters. He wants instructions of H.M. Government as to line he ought to take at such discussion. *Private and Personal.* I don't at all relish idea of interview between Kitchener and Boer delegates. . . .

Telegram. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

12/4/02. [MATTER MOST URGENT. CONFIDENTIAL] . . . We cannot give any instructions until we have received the proposals of the Boers, which should be obtained in writing. No opinion on these proposals should be expressed by you or Kitchener. *Secret and Personal.* We have never contemplated negotiations as possible except with your participation.

Whilst the Boer representatives had been coming in from their distant camps (Smuts was 600 miles away), Kitchener was considering what concessions might be made. At the end of March he was suggesting to the British Government that the Boers might be promised self-government in two or three years' time, if they behaved well. The last year's task had been a trying and distasteful one. Possibly he was anxious lest a dictated peace, based on unconditional surrender with no immediate prospect of self-government, should preclude all hope of the ultimate reconciliation and union of the two white races.[1] Apart from these considerations, there was a strong desire that peace should be concluded before the approaching Coronation of King Edward VII. On the other hand, the point of view of other parts of the British Empire, which had taken their share in the war, was quite uncompromising. Australia agreed with Natal that unconditional surrender must precede concessions. It must be brought home to the Boers and their women-folk that they had been beaten in the field, and were wholly at the mercy of Great Britain (Milner Papers, XVIII, iii, 40).

Milner himself was as firmly convinced as ever that British sovereignty founded on acknowledged military conquest, must be the basis of peace negotiations. His gaze was fixed upon the future. He was as well aware as Kitchener that the happiness and prosperity of South Africa must depend upon Briton and Boer working together for those ends. Looking to the future, he had laid his long-thought-out plans for resettlement, reconciliation, and reconstruction. But he despaired of being able to develop them, unless time were given him under modified Crown Colony government, whilst the blight of the politician was arrested for a while. He saw no occasion for the concessions which Kitchener was ready to make. He was not prepared to sacrifice British and Dutch loyalists, and

[1] Cf. Sir G. Arthur's "Life of Lord Kitchener," Vol. II; Sir F. Maurice, "Life of Lord Rawlinson," pp. 73–5.

those Boers who had come over to the British side, in order to save the faces of those who had fought to the end. He judged, and judged rightly, that the latter were in a desperate plight, and suffering from acute shortages of supplies of all kinds. The winter, which they dreaded, was at hand ; the blockhouse system was perfected ; they could watch the development of the settled areas, and the extension of the denuded areas, within which they could no longer live or operate. Each day diminished their numbers, and thereby placed the Boer survivors in the Transvaal in a larger minority. This, in fact, was one strong reason why the Transvaalers were more anxious for peace than the Free Staters. Moreover, the growing strength of the National Scouts and volunteers from the Orange River Colony was an ever-increasing threat against those who remained in the field, dwindling in numbers and prestige. For these reasons Milner disliked the abandonment of unconditional surrender, and the offer of terms to leaders who had been proclaimed outlaws ; he disliked a referendum confined to that section of the people who remained in the field. For these reasons he dreaded lest Kitchener by vague promises, or unnecessary concessions, or avoidance of awkward details, should compromise a victory which had been won, and render the task which lay before him immeasurably more difficult.

" K.'s policy," he wrote in a letter to a friend (11/5/02), " though, I think, wholly mistaken, is a possible one. It is . . . a misconception, very general, and perhaps even prevalent, among the upper classes at home, of the real situation here. . . . But good comes out of evil. My political dreams may be done for, but I am not done for. If there is one thing deep down at the bottom of me, it is the conviction that the High Gods know best. I have fought, for all I was worth. . . . The fight was a big one—for the greatness and dignity of my country. If the nation, or rather the makers of national opinion—for this it is the educated class alone which counts—don't care sufficiently about these things, one must accept the decisive fact. A great political life is not the only thing in the world . . . there is so much that is sound in our nation, and they have uses for me too outside public life.". . .

On April 11, Kitchener had been authorized to meet the Boer representatives. He was instructed to invite Milner to be present. But, after consultation with the latter, it was arranged that the General should receive the Boer representatives alone (Milner Papers, XLIX, iv, 4). On the morning of the following day, they

met Kitchener in his house at Pretoria. Schalk Burger read a document which had been drawn up by the Boer leaders. They asked the British Government to " enter into an agreement of peace with them," and submitted seven points which would in their opinion prevent all future wars. The seven points were (i) Franchise ; (ii) Equal rights for Dutch and English languages in educational matters ; (iii and v) Customs, Post, Telegraph, and Railway Unions ; (vi) Arbitration in case of future differences, only subjects of the parties to be arbitrators ; (vii) Mutual amnesty. In return for these concessions, they offered (iv) to dismantle all forts in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony. If these conditions were not satisfactory, they desired to know what terms would be given (Cd. 1096).

To these points, really grotesque in the circumstances, Kitchener replied that he did not think that they offered a promising basis for negotiation. Putting aside all minor points, he asked whether the proposals meant that the Boers still adhered to their demand for Independence. Steyn answered, that their one aim was to secure a lasting peace, and to attain the object for which they had fought. Kitchener said that he would certainly submit their proposals to H.M. Government, but refusal was inevitable of these or any others, which postulated the independence of the Republics. Steyn then explained that though they had power to make peace, they had no power to give up independence without first obtaining the sanction of the people. Kitchener said that a referendum might possibly be allowed, but inquired whether they intended to consult burghers in the field, as well as prisoners and others ; and whether they would advise acceptance of the British terms. Steyn demurred to giving such advice, whilst Burger said that, if they were to advise surrender of independence, they must know how long it would be before they were given self-government. Kitchener declined to commit himself without instructions from his Government, but insisted that the time had come for a frank recognition that independence must be given up. Steyn asked if there were no other means of " ending the war without depriving us of our self-respect." Kitchener tactfully replied that there could be no possible question of men who had fought so well in the field losing their self-respect by facing the inevitable. Steyn then angled for permission to consult Mr. Fischer and the other Boer deputies in Europe. This Kitchener refused, and urged the Boer representatives to frame their proposals in such a way as to show that they accepted the loss

of independence. Further details might then be discussed. Steyn continued in the same vein, and again asked that their seven points should be laid before the British Government.

By 9.30 a.m. on the morning of the preceding day (April 11), General Ian Hamilton had gained a complete victory over the Boers under Kemp at Roodeval. He had immediately wired the news to the Commander-in-Chief.[1] Both sides therefore must have been aware of this potent argument for peace when they met. Kitchener no doubt made use of it, and as the Boers had excellent communications by heliograph, there can be little doubt that De la Rey was already aware of the destruction of his forces. Yet the full significance of that argument cannot have been fully realized by the Boers. For a deadlock had now been reached. Though Kitchener held this trump card in his hand, it was apparently in order to avoid breaking off negotiations that he consented to transmit the seven points. He then apprised Milner of what had passed. The Home Government's reply was unmistakable (April 13). Whilst hoping that the present negotiations would lead to peace, they refused to entertain any proposals based on the independence of the Republics. Kitchener and Milner were instructed to explain this to the Boer representatives. They were not to formulate any counter-proposals, but to encourage the Boers to put forward fresh ones, excluding independence.

Extract from Telegram. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

13/4/02. . . . My own feeling remains substantially as stated in speech in House of Commons Jan. 20, but if you think it wise to go further to secure peace, I shall not shrink from charge of inconsistency, especially if moderate and influential local opinion justifies change. I assume discussion will proceed in the spirit of the last offer to Botha, but details require most careful revision. . . . The following suggestion has been made as to the vexed question of amnesty. *Begins:* "In case of surrenders made in pursuance of this Convention, rebels may be brought to trial, but if convicted of treason only, all sentences will be remitted, except moderate fines and disfranchisement for life, which *ipso facto* results from conviction." *Ends.* This leaves untouched previous sentences, which might however be reconsidered . . . after the war, and also all cases of offences against usages of war and civil offences independent of treason. . . . The question of the return of

[1] Kitchener must have received it by 11 a.m. on April 11. I am indebted to General Sir Ian Hamilton, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., for information on this point.

prisoners and of language will have your careful consideration. The question of money loan ought not to stand in the way of a satisfactory settlement in other respects. The enormous cost of the war and the continuous strain upon the army makes peace most desirable, but we cannot buy it by concessions which may encourage future rebellion, or which would justify the loyal section in saying they had been betrayed. In this connection the question of compensation to loyalists may be important, as they ought to be placed in a better position than those who have fought against us.

The reply of H.M. Government was communicated to the Boer representatives on the following day (April 14). At this and all subsequent meetings the High Commissioner was present. On being informed by Kitchener of the answer of the Home Government, he had hastened to Pretoria, where he took up his quarters at the old "Residency" (Sunday, April 13).

Lord Milner introduced himself by saying that, in spite of the stories circulated to the contrary, he was most anxious to see an end of bloodshed and a settlement honourable to all. It was a duty to humanity to see that no time was lost in trying to repair the damage done. The decision rested with H.M. Government, but he hoped that by their meetings and discussions, he would be able to explain any points of difference or misunderstandings. President Steyn complained that the Home Government's reply did not advance matters. They had no constitutional power to give away their independence without the sanction of the burghers. Milner interposed that they were not prohibited from explaining the situation to them and suggesting what course they should adopt. Steyn replied that that was why they asked for alternative proposals from the British Government, which they could submit, not as their own suggestions, but as the terms of the conqueror. Schalk Burger, Botha, and De Wet agreed. To treat on the assumption that independence was abandoned would lay them open to the charge of having broken their oaths and betrayed their countrymen. In reply to a question from Milner, Steyn stated that they would only consult the burghers in the field.

As a deadlock seemed to have been reached, Milner proposed an adjournment for consideration. On resuming in the afternoon, Steyn announced that it had been decided to ask for an armistice, in order to consult the people, and also for a safe-conduct for one of their delegates to come from Europe. Kitchener replied that

the request for an armistice was entirely premature ; the second request he had already refused. But he offered to send an agreed telegram, inviting the British Government to formulate the terms which, subsequent to a surrender of independence, they would be prepared to grant, leaving the door open to some modifications. Such terms the Representatives agreed to submit to their people, without any expression of approval or disapproval.

Milner lost no time in acquainting Chamberlain with his view as to what line the answer to the agreed telegram should take :

Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

14/4/02. [SECRET, PRIVATE AND PERSONAL] Personally I distrust all negotiations, and should regard the future with more hope if the war was ended by a continuance of captures and surrenders, which, despite our constantly recurring mishaps, continue to take place at a satisfactory rate. This feeling is shared I believe by all our friends in South Africa. But as public feeling at home evidently favours negotiations, we must do the best we can. I am strongly of opinion that we should not retreat an inch from the position taken up by you in the speech of Jan. 20. I think that, in reply to the Boer message of to-day, H.M. Government would do well to refer to the offer made to Botha in Lord Kitchener's letter of March 7, [1901],[1] to point out that after the subsequent great reduction in the strength of the Boers and our own expenditure of life and treasure, we should be justified in imposing far more one ous conditions, but that out of their clemency and great desire for peace, they are prepared, though for the last time, to accept a general surrender on these lines, though with some modifications of detail, which the altered circumstances render necessary. They are prepared to authorize Lord Kitchener and me to further discuss details on that basis, each side being free to suggest modifications, and, if a preliminary understanding can be arrived at, to afford the Representatives an opportunity to consult the Burghers still in the field. If further discussion takes place, I think we should have definite instructions on the following points. (i) That the understanding is not to be allowed to take the form of a treaty or convention. The Boers must be content to trust H.M. Government to do what they declare that they intend to do. (ii) That no date can be fixed for the introduction of self-government. I am absolutely convinced that we cannot afford to go beyond what was said in Paragraph 4 of Lord Kitchener's letter on March 7. (iii) That we should be somewhat stiffer on points 3 and 6, viz. : return of prisoners and Dutch language. It should be clearly

[1] Cd. 663, p. 1 ; *v.* Ch. VI, p. 211.

understood that the return of prisoners may take some considerable time, and that we do not promise equality of the two languages. English must be the official language and the principal medium of instruction. But there will be no attempt to proscribe Dutch either in the Courts or the schools. No man should be allowed to suffer prejudice from his ignorance of English. On the other hand, I think we might relax to some extent under the head of amnesty, on the lines suggested in your telegram. I should even be prepared to [go] as far as this, that all rebels still in the field, if they take part in the general surrender, be formally tried and, on pleading guilty of high treason, be condemned to no other punishment than disfranchisement. They would remain in custody till their trial was over, and the amnesty would only apply to their part in the war, not to ordinary crimes committed under the cloak of war. This should not apply to rebels already tried, but we might say generally that His Majesty would be prepared in the general pacification of the country to review their sentences in a spirit of leniency.

Telegram. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

16/4/02. [SECRET AND PERSONAL. MATTER MOST URGENT] In further discussion with the Boer leaders you should avoid showing your hand as far as possible while they remain absolutely unpledged. The concessions we are willing to make, and to which I refer below, are very great, and represent, I think, the extreme limit. We ought not to agree to them unless we get something in return. We also think that the Boers ought to, and will, if they are sincere, give an assurance beforehand that if any agreement is ultimately reached, they will use all their influence to get it accepted by their followers. It is probable that many of these are really anxious to surrender, if their personal interests are fairly considered. This makes the question of amnesty and restoration of farms most important. We are willing to be generous in both respects, providing that we do not place our enemies, and especially rebels, in a better position than those who have been loyal. If you can secure this, you might agree to allot any amount necessary for rebuilding and restocking farms, and although there would be many advantages in doing this by means of loans, we do not exclude the idea of gifts. But in either case, you must see that loyalists are compensated in an equal or more liberal degree for their losses. The Cape and Natal have not lost pecuniarily as States. They ought to help their own people. It seems to us that rebels should not have money compensation in any case. Whatever we do in respect of amnesty and compensation, we must

carry with us the opinion of the Colonial Governments and of moderate loyalists. We cannot impose on them a peace which they will regard as betrayal. Subject to these observations, we would agree to very liberal proposals in the direction of amnesty. We consider that the understanding must not be a Treaty, nor capable of being represented as a contract between two Powers of equal or similar status, but it will be necessary that any terms that may be agreed to, should be reduced to writing and signed by the leaders, in order that they may carry weight with the prisoners abroad and in the camps.

No date can be fixed for the introduction of self-government. It is our interest as well as our desire that it shall be as early as possible. Return of the prisoners can only be gradual. The condition of the country would make wholesale repatriation a disaster to the people themselves. English will be the official language, although no attempt will be made to proscribe Dutch. We suppose in many cases the Taal must be the medium of instruction for the very young. The responsibility for debts of the Republic for goods commandeered would be entirely without precedent. It would be open to fraud, and we should prefer to give additional money for restocking farms. Lord Kitchener will know best how far it would be safe in any case to allow an armistice. It would tend to delay and probably to recrimination. It ought not to be allowed, unless you are convinced of the sincerity of the delegates and probable satisfactory results. We have refused to discuss terms with any but the leaders in the field. The men who have secured safety for themselves and property in Europe, are not likely to be eager for peace, and we do not believe that they have any authority. If the representatives are only anxious to be assured that nothing has occurred to favour their cause, there should be other ways of convincing them. We have just asked Parliament for means to prosecute the war on its present scale for another year, and there is no doubt that the funds will be voted. We send the above, which please communicate to Lord Kitchener, for your assistance in discussion.

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

16/4/02. [SECRET, PRIVATE AND PERSONAL] . . . The following hints may be useful in course of negotiations. (i) Result evidently depends more on personal considerations than on exact nature of terms. Three-fourths of representatives want to give in, but no one wants to take lead in that direction. Each is manœuvring to put someone else in front place, and if they finally decide to give in, they will try to make it appear that it was under pressure of

burghers in field. Really the latter will do just what their leaders secretly desire. (ii) The Free Staters are much less friendly than the Transvaalers. Judge Hertzog is probably quite irreconcilable, and is said to have great influence with Steyn. The latter would be equally obstinate and most dangerous, if his health were not so bad. But I do not think he has the physical strength to compel others to go on against their will. De Wet is wavering. . . . (iii) The stay of representatives at Pretoria is good. The Dutch in the town are hot for peace, and the spectacle of an established government working on quietly as if war did not exist, must impress them with the hopelessness of their cause. My general conclusion is that, while we must of course avoid appearance of deliberate delay, we should not hurry, and above all should not yield any point of great importance to the future of the country. It is quite unnecessary. If they yield at all, it will not be because of one or other clause in our terms, but of the strength of the general longing for peace on any conditions, short of banishment or confiscation. My great difficulty is Lord Kitchener. He is extremely adroit in his management of negotiations, but he does not care what he gives away. If he knew as an absolute certainty that H.M. Government would not yield on certain points, no one would be more skilful than he in steering the Boers off these points, and guiding the discussion in directions in which some concession was possible.

The reply of the Home Government to the " agreed " telegram of April 14 came in the form of a cable from the War Office to Kitchener on the 16th. Its tone was evidently inspired by Milner's hints to Chamberlain (p. 334). Surprise was expressed that the Boer representatives should have submitted proposals based on a renewal of independence, after the repeated declarations on that point. The sacrifices involved by their rejection of the Middelburg offer, and the great reduction of their strength since then, justified the imposition of far more onerous terms. But in order to avoid further bloodshed and to hasten the return of peace and prosperity, H.M. Government was prepared to " accept a general surrender on the lines of that offer, but with such modifications in detail as may be mutually agreed upon " (Cd. 1096).

Kitchener's suggestion that a date should be fixed for the introduction of self-government, as Burger had demanded, was wisely rejected. Milner was not alone in his opposition to it. In the Orange River Colony, both Major Goold-Adams and Mr. J. G. Fraser expressed alarm at the idea that representative government was to be conceded at the end of five years. They warned Milner

that, in their opinion, that would " wreck the whole result of the war." Representative Government should only be given when all traces of racial animosity had disappeared (Milner Papers, XLIX, i, 18).

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Major Goold-Adams.

16/4/02. I agree. Personally I shall never consent to Representative Government being granted in any given time.

The terms of the British Government were communicated to the Boer Delegates by Kitchener and Milner on April 17. After an adjournment, the Boers repeated their requests for an armistice and a safe conduct for their deputies in Europe. Kitchener refused both requests on military grounds. An armistice at this stage of negotiations would, he declared, be absolutely without precedent. " I have nothing in my hands to show that you have the intention of making peace." Steyn thought that a precedent could be found in Alsace and Lorraine. Milner countered with " Yes, but in that case there was an agreement between the Governments as to the terms of peace to be submitted to the people. . . . In this case there is no preliminary understanding at all. The objection to an armistice is the total absence of any result whatever from these proceedings."

The Delegates then accepted Kitchener's offer to grant facilities for consulting the burghers in the field. Milner, noting that the Delegates had expressed no opinion upon the proposals of H.M. Government, was not inclined to leave a loophole for prolonging negotiations indefinitely. But though he could not induce the Delegates to lay before the burghers a definite proposal of acceptance of the terms offered, he extracted from them a promise to ask for powers to act as plenipotentiaries on their return. " If you merely come back," he observed, " with new proposals from the people, which H.M. Government may not accept, and then go back and consult again, this sort of thing may go on indefinitely. We have less reason to mind how long this goes on than you have. But I have a certain interest in this country, and I wish to advance matters." " We go," said Burger and Steyn at last, " to get authority to make terms."

Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

17/4/02. Lord Kitchener and I met the Boer delegates this morning when he read to them War Office telegram of April 16.

They immediately asked for an adjournment to consider it. On our reassembling at 3 o'clock, Mr. Schalk Burger, on behalf of both the Republics, asked for an armistice, to enable them to lay the message of H.M. Government before the burghers. He also asked that one of their delegates in Europe should be allowed to come over. This Lord Kitchener absolutely declined. He also declined to agree to an armistice, but expressed his willingness to give facilities for the election and meeting of representatives from the various commandos to consider the position. I argued that the course adopted was not likely to lead to a speedy settlement, as no understanding whatever had been arrived at as to what the representatives would recommend to the burghers. If they returned with instructions to propose something which H.M. Government could not accept, the negotiations would have made no advance at all. President Steyn however maintained that the best way of arriving at a settlement was for the representatives to meet the burghers at once. They would then know once for all whether they could go on with the negotiations. In reply to a question from me, whether, in the case of the burghers deciding to abandon independence, the representatives would come back empowered to finally arrange matters, or simply empowered to discuss with a further reference to the burghers, Mr. Schalk Burger answered that it was their intention to ask for full powers. The representatives all expressed themselves extremely pleased with Lord Kitchener's consent to give the facilities for holding a meeting of burghers, and accepted it with alacrity.

Telegram. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

18/4/02. Referring to your telegram of April 16, do you desire to suggest any further message from War Office to Lord Kitchener on subject ?

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

21/4/02. [SECRET. PRIVATE AND PERSONAL] Yes, I think it important that Lord Kitchener should be clearly told that H.M. Government is not prepared to make concessions on points of policy, and the sooner the better. In order to avoid any appearance of distinguishing between him and me, I suggest identical telegram from the War Office to him, and you to me, each of us being informed that the other is being similarly instructed. Lord Kitchener has opportunities of influencing Boers which I have not,[1] especially under present circumstances. If he felt certain that demands for political concessions would lead to the failure of

[1] Kitchener had interviews with the Boer leaders outside the Conference room.

negotiations, I think it less probable that such demands would be made. My own conviction is unshakable that, if the Boers mean peace at all, they will, whatever they ask, be quite satisfied with our terms, plus qualified amnesty on the lines of my telegram of April 14. As regards money to resettle Boers, I was originally in favour of gifts in some cases as well as loans. But I have altered my view on this, for various reasons, not the least of which is the strong feeling even among the most moderate loyalists against gifts. Obviously the object I had in view may be equally well attained by not enforcing repayment of loans hereafter, in specially hard cases. This would avoid great dissatisfaction, which any promise of giving money, coming as it ultimately must out of pockets of loyalists, would now certainly excite.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

21/4/02. . . . Personally I disliked the course and am disappointed at the result of the negotiations. Kitchener practically held all the strings throughout.[1] He was in constant communication with the Boers and steered them into the paths he chose. I think it was a mistake letting them go away without committing themselves at all, but he was strongly of an opposite opinion, thinking that he had got some of them into an excellent frame of mind, and had better hustle them off to their commandos, before the less conciliatory spirits could shake them. Hence the farcicality of our formal proceedings. He may be right. I feel it is even betting how things turn at the next meeting. We are certainly much nearer a collapse of the enemy than we ever were, and, having regard to the utter hopelessness of their position, the more pacific men, though they are the weaker characters, will perhaps carry the day. One thing I am perfectly certain of. When the Boer leaders come back, they will have made up their minds whether they will surrender or not surrender, though they will still pretend that it depends on our terms. They are past masters in the "Kaffir bargain." My conclusion is, that there is no object in giving in on any point which can cause us subsequent disadvantage. If they mean peace, they will accept what we are prepared to give them. The great danger is that, if they come abandoning independence, but asking impossible things in return, the great longing for peace at home and the sort of popular generosity of the national temperament will bring pressure to bear in favour of our giving in. However, I am quite determined to stick out myself. If I am once more represented as the evil genius,

[1] Milner had remarked to a member of his staff, "I feel as if I were negotiating with Kitchener, whilst the Boers look on."

who always prevents peace and conciliation, I can't help it. I know I am right. . . .

Telegram. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

22/4/02. [PRIVATE AND PERSONAL] You will have understood from our private telegrams that we are entirely opposed to political pledges or conditions which may hamper us in the future and may lead to recrimination. We are ready to be liberal in all personal matters, but the Boers are not in a position to demand conditions of peace which would tie our hands in future administration. In any future conference Government's efforts should be directed to keeping the Boers to the personal question on which we are ready to make concession, and not to encourage them to hope for political promises. The capitulation of Lee in the American war is the example we should like to follow. Lord Kitchener has been similarly informed.

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

29/4/02. . . . No need, I think, to extend amnesty to any but South African rebels. Even as regards these, matter requires most delicate handling. General feeling of loyalists here is alarmingly strong against any amnesty whatever. I think, however, this may be got over, if it is made quite clear (i) that amnesty extends only to rebels who come in and surrender at once with regular commandos, not to roving brigands who continue out; (ii) that they are all disfranchised for life. This makes awkward distinction between them and rebels condemned by treason court. But I think, as former all belonged to first rebellion, and joined enemy when country was virtually in their hands and laid down arms very promptly, when enemy retired from Colony, their case is morally distinguishable from that of participants in second rebellion, who had less excuse and have been much more persistent; (iii) that rebels who have committed outrages are excluded from amnesty. Conduct of some Colonial rebels, especially latterly, has been very bad, killing natives and women, flogging officials, and so forth.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Major Hanbury Williams.

30/4/02. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . The position is quite what you surmised. No doubt Joe alone is playing the right game at home, and I am, as usual, alone here. It seems a little hard upon the poor B.P., who are, I believe, perfectly sound, that they should always be exposed to the risk of being "given away" by their Cabinets and Generals. However, be it known unto you that I

am never going to assent to really rotten terms, not tho' the Boers, grown fat and defiant by a month of rest and recuperation, should be ever so truculent. I hate all negotiations, but having to negotiate, I recognize that one must give up something which one need not have given up. But that something will never, with my assent, be anything vital. If a bad peace is to be made, it must be over my political corpse. The obvious principle seems to be, that the man who is going to run the whole show should arrange the conditions. If K. is going to make the bed, let *him* lie in it, and not Yours ever, M.

Extract from Letter. Lady Edward Cecil to Lord Milner.

17/5/02. . . . Lord Salisbury is saying openly and *to gossips* (therefore on purpose) that K. would make any peace to get out of the country. . . . Still the forces on our side are strong.

For a good settlement.	*Against.*
(1) The English Nation.	(1) The rest of the Government.
(2) The Colonies.	(2) The Party Hacks.
(3) Loyal South Africa.	(3) Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.
(4) Joe.	(4) K.
(5) Lords Salisbury and Selborne.	

K. is of course the danger, he is offering the Government what seventeen of them want. . . .

For a month the war was carried on unremittingly, whilst, under a system of passes and within a certain specified area, the commandos were allowed to assemble and conduct a General Election. Thirty burghers were elected from each State. Charged with varying mandates, they assembled at Vereeniging to meet the two Boer Governments on May 15. Was it to be peace or war, surrender or insistence upon independence? The Transvaalers were mainly for peace, but the Free State representatives and some of the Northern and Western Transvaalers had been instructed to yield nothing on the point of independence. Burger, Smuts, Botha, De la Rey, were all moderate men. They had been ready to fight so long as there remained any hope of their achieving their ambition. But they had the courage to face the facts, and to look to the future. They would not wreck their country and exterminate their race in a futile resistance. The Die-hards were led by Steyn, Kemp, and De Wet, who had been conducting a fiery crusade against any surrender of independence. Would the Die-hards win the day?

For two days the issue hung in the balance, whilst the delegates

debated. Steyn was ill, but Kemp and De Wet thundered defiance and invoked religion. Burger, Botha, Smuts, and finally even Hertzog met the situation with courage, sanity, and address. Whilst some commandos were in a bad plight, others, like those of De Wet and De la Rey, were capable of prolonged resistance. But Smuts admitted that the prospect of success in the Cape Colony was gone. The hopes of President Kruger had proved vain. In the end, Botha answered the invectives of De Wet by a deadly recital of the facts. Hope of foreign intervention there was none. British determination was unshaken. The blockhouse system was paralysing mobility. The shortage of supplies was acute. The losses of the commandos and the sufferings of the women, now no longer admitted to the Concentration Camps, were daily increasing. Peace was a necessity. Convinced by these arguments, De la Rey, " the old lion of the Western Transvaal," chivalrous in the field and calm in council, broke silence. His commandos could go on fighting, but the nation could not. " Fight to the bitter end? the bitter end has come." He gave his vote for Botha. The die was cast.

Next day (May 17), a proposal under four heads was approved by the Delegates: (i) Relations with Foreign Powers were to be given up. (ii) A British Protectorate to be declared over the two States. (iii) Territory to be ceded, such as Swaziland and the Witwatersrand. (iv) A defensive alliance to be concluded with Great Britain. Botha, De la Rey, De Wet, Smuts and Hertzog were deputed to proceed to Pretoria, and negotiate on that basis. If that basis were ruled out, they were to negotiate on any lines they thought fit. On learning of the appointment of this Commission, Milner conferred with Kitchener on the telephone. The Presidents were asked whether the Commission had plenary powers to agree to terms. The reply came that they were empowered to negotiate and agree, " subject to the ratification of the Burgher Assembly " ; and it was explained, unofficially, that such ratification would prove more satisfactory because it would prevent a minority from subsequently repudiating any agreement made by the Commission (May 17 and 18). It was decided to invite the Delegates to Pretoria. Accordingly, on May 19, at 11 o'clock, the Commissioners met Milner and Kitchener. Colonel Hubert Hamilton, Captain F. J. Henley and Mr. Walrond were present as Secretaries for the British side, Mr. Van Velden for the Transvaal, and the Rev. J. D. Kestell for the Orange Free State.

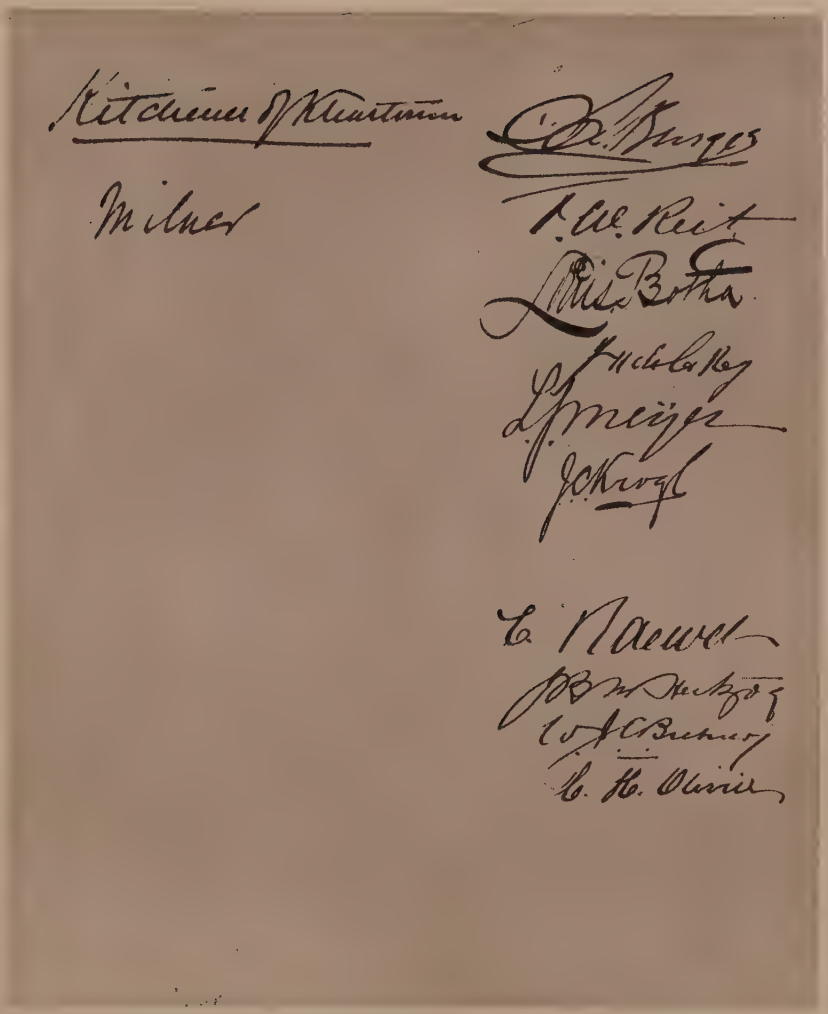
General Louis Botha began by offering, in addition to the points already offered at Middelburg, the following points as a basis for negotiations: (i) We are prepared to surrender our independence as regards foreign relations. (ii) We ask to retain internal self-government under British supervision. (iii) We are prepared to surrender a part of our territory.

It can hardly be supposed that the astute negotiators who submitted these extraordinary conditions expected that they would be seriously entertained. If so they were promptly disillusioned by Milner's declaration that, having regard to the wide difference between this proposal and that of H.M. Government, there was no hope of fruitful negotiation. If it was final, he had no hesitation in taking upon himself to refuse it. Kitchener agreed, and asked whether the new proposal contemplated the Boers becoming British citizens. No direct reply was forthcoming. A debate ensued between Milner, Hertzog and Smuts, upon the suggestion put forward with inimitable gravity by the latter, that this new proposal was not necessarily in conflict with the terms laid down by H.M. Government at Middelburg.

Finally, Milner compelled the admission that there was a fundamental difference. He added, that Kitchener and he were not authorized to negotiate on a basis differing from that laid down by the British Government. Nor were they willing to do so. The British Government had made proposals at the invitation of the Boers, when they refused to make new ones themselves. They were entitled to an answer, and would certainly not make further concessions. Kitchener pointed out that Steyn had undertaken (April 15) to consult the people on the definite proposals of the British Government. If the Boers refused to discuss the terms offered, H.M. Government ought to be informed at once. Was it to be understood that their reply was embodied in the new proposals?

Smuts replied that there were no new definite proposals, only proposals to be submitted as forming a new basis for discussion. When Botha asked for a definite answer to them, Kitchener gave it. "They are impossible. . . . It would be much better to write down something practical, based on the letter of March 7 (1901)." And when Milner offered to refer them to the Home Government, it was with the "distinct warning that it is likely to hamper, not to facilitate negotiations."

Smuts then referred to the third part of the proposal, "to



SIGNATURES TO THE VEREENIGING AGREEMENT, MAY 31, 1902.

surrender part of our territory." This was shown to be an absurd and impossible suggestion, since the whole country was admittedly annexed. Milner elicited that it meant that " part of the country should be a Crown Colony, and the other part a Protected Republic." " That," said Kitchener, " is impossible, on military grounds alone. There would be war again in a year." And with that the negotiators adjourned for lunch.

The Boer lawyers had fought a forlorn hope with infinite ingenuity. But the prolonged duel had not been without effect. The unyielding attitude of the British representatives, the firmness and acumen of Kitchener, and the remorseless logic of the High Commissioner, had shown plainly enough that no verbal quibbling or slimness in debate would gain what arms had failed to achieve. " We must have something practical to go on," Kitchener had said in conclusion. And before the Conference had reassembled, a further adjournment was requested by the Boer representatives, whilst " something practical " was arranged. Smuts had an informal meeting with Milner and Kitchener. It became evident that acceptance of their new proposals was not expected by the Boers, and that an endeavour was being made to find out what concessions the British could be induced to make (Milner Papers, XLIX, iv, 20).

When the Commissioners met again at four o'clock, Milner announced that Kitchener and he had drafted a document for their consideration. They proposed that the Commissioners should sign it, and then submit it to the burghers for a straight Yes or No decision. Milner's original draft of this document ran as follows :

" The Undersigned Leaders of the Burgher Forces in the Field, accepting on behalf of themselves and the said Burghers the Annexations notified in Lord Roberts' Proclamations . . . and as a result thereof, their position as British Citizens, agree forthwith to lay down their arms, handing over all guns, rifles, and munitions of war in their possession, or under their control, and to desist from any further resistance. . . . They take this course on the faith of the assurances of H.M. Government, that they and the Burghers surrendering with them, will not be deprived of their personal freedom or of their property, and that the future action of H.M. Government in dealing with the results of the war will be in accordance with the declarations set forth below. It is clearly understood that all Burghers, now Prisoners of War, must,

in order to participate in the benefits of the aforesaid assurances, signify their acceptance of the position as British Citizens."

The document thus left room for the inclusion of the Middelburg proposals, with modifications, which Milner suggested should be in the form of a schedule. The re-drafting of the Middelburg proposals might, Kitchener suggested, be done by a Sub-Committee drawn from both sides of the Commission. Smuts tried to get Milner and Kitchener to do the re-drafting, and to submit the result to the Boer Delegates. Milner would have none of that. "We do not propose to draft new documents without you, for you to cut up and alter."

Smuts then raised the question of the responsibility of the signatories. "If the Commission signs the document, will the effect be to make signatories responsible for any burghers who do not lay down their arms?" "If they won't take responsibility," Milner replied, "I don't see how the terms are to be carried out." He agreed with Kitchener that the few who might continue fighting after the Assembly had accepted the terms, would become outlaws, for whom the leaders could not be held responsible. A heated discussion followed. Milner insisted that some assurance must be given that the burghers would live in peace. A breakdown seemed imminent. At last a way out was found in the adoption of Kitchener's suggestion for the appointment of a sub-committee to prepare the details of the schedule, so as to be as acceptable as possible. De Wet, however, still remained obdurate. He saw "no chance of putting a body on such a head." The complete surrender formulated in the preamble was too much for him.

"Very well then," commented Milner, "it is clear we cannot go further." The situation was saved by Kitchener. For at this critical moment he made the diplomatic suggestion that friction might be avoided by the withdrawal of the military element from the discussion. The document might best be drafted by a sub-committee of the civil members, for subsequent approval by the Commission as a whole. If this eliminated himself, it also eliminated the firebrand De Wet. At Milner's suggestion, it was agreed that Sir Richard Solomon should assist him as legal adviser and that Hertzog should assist Smuts. The next two days were spent in hard conflict with the Boer lawyers. They fought stoutly, though they won few concessions. At last an acceptable formula was found.

The concessions made were partly of a sentimental kind,

calculated to soothe the pride of the Boer leaders, and partly of a financial and political character. The direct acceptance of the annexations in the preamble of the document of May 19 was dropped, and the instrument to be signed ceased to be a declaration of submission and took the form of a Treaty, signed by Plenipotentiaries acting on behalf of the Republics. No one would wish to deny that the courage, determination, and endurance with which the Boers had fought, entitled them to such consideration on their absorption as worthy comrades into the British Empire; men, after all, who a dozen years later were to fight for it in the World War. Annexation, then, was ignored in the preamble, but was recognized in the opening clause, which provided that the burghers should surrender their arms and recognize King Edward VII as their lawful sovereign. On two other important points the draft Treaty differed from the Middelburg terms: (i) It was left to the Colonial Governments concerned to deal with the rebels in the Cape Colony and Natal. (ii) The other point was in connection with the liabilities of the two Republics.

Over this matter prolonged debate ensued, when the negotiators met in full conclave on May 21 to consider the draft settlement. At Middelburg Milner had resisted any acknowledgment of liability on the part of Great Britain for debts incurred in waging war against her. As an act of grace, a million pounds had then been offered as compensation for all losses, for which commandeer-notes and receipts were to be admitted as evidence. Now, in sub-committee, Milner had agreed to a promise that the notes issued by the South African Republic during the war should be honoured, though without interest.

At the full Conference, Botha began by insisting that receipts for goods bought for the commandos and signed by the Generals and their officers, should be honoured equally with the notes. The Free State, indeed, had issued no notes, but had merely given receipts for requisitioned goods. Such receipts formed a debt of honour, which, the Boer Commissioners insisted, ought to be paid in full by the British Government, seeing that it had taken over all their assets. On this point Kitchener sided with the Boer leaders. Milner objected to any modification. Neither had the least inclination to refuse compensation for damage caused by the war. But whilst Kitchener directed his questions to limiting the sum demanded, Milner sought to avoid establishing the principle that the conqueror must pay the costs of the conquered. Great Britain

would be generous. It was both her duty and her desire to restore the new British subjects to prosperity. But the demand for payment in full for all bank-notes, Treasury bills and commandeer-notes issued on behalf of the warring States was, as he said, virtually to insist that the British Government should pay for all money borrowed by the two Republics in order to fight it. " We are not," he continued, " taking over the assets of the country without its liabilities. We are taking over all the liabilities the country had before the war, and we have even consented in this proposal to take over a legal debt in the shape of notes, which we were aware were only rendered necessary for the purposes of the war, and therefore to that extent we are paying part of the cost of the fight against ourselves. I thought that was a very great concession, and when I agreed to putting it down as a proposal, I said, and still think, that the British Government may take exception to it. I hope it won't. But to go beyond that, and to ask that we should pay not only for a debt contracted under a law passed for the purposes of the war, but also for every debt contracted by every officer of both armies for the purpose of fighting us is, to my mind, a most extreme proposal. . . ."

The recognition of all claims of that character would, indeed, involve liabilities limited only by the appetite of claimants, and create a sense of grievance where it was not satisfied. The demand for payment in full was then dropped. But Milner's endeavour to limit the concessions to the original free gift of a million pounds was frustrated by the Middelburg negotiations. Whilst Kitchener tried in vain to induce the Delegates to name the sum required, Smuts maintained that the principle involved had already been conceded in the Middelburg terms. " The question of Government notes was then refused, but the receipts were to be paid." The payment of the notes, he argued, had now been conceded ; the payment of receipts could not fairly be withdrawn. The amount involved was small. Milner retorted that he objected to payment both of notes and requisitions. The British people would rather spend a large sum in improving the condition of the people after the war, than pay a smaller sum for their expenses in fighting. But the payment of the notes was less objectionable than the payment of requisitions ; and he had consented in sub-committee to the payment of the notes, because the Boer Delegates had preferred that to the payment of receipts, if it was a question of one or the other. He himself was quite ready to revert to the Middelburg proposal, which was absolutely opposed to the payment of both.

After Hertzog had explained the position of the Free State, Kitchener reverted to the sum involved, and Milner was driven to suggest a compromise—to allow both notes and receipts to be presented, and to reintroduce the limit of a million pounds. "That would not meet the case," interjected Smuts, scenting a bargain. "Would two millions meet it?" asked Kitchener. "What we want is to fix some limit." "It is not possible to gauge the amount," said De Wet. "Of course," Milner put in, "if you fix a limit, then, if that is exceeded, they will all have to be reduced in proportion." "If you could give us a limit to the amount," repeated Kitchener, "it would clear the situation immensely." And so it was agreed that the Delegates should adjourn to fix the amount which "it was not possible to gauge."

Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

21/5/02. The negotiations, which were going well yesterday in the sub-Committee, have now taken a turn for the worse, and the Boers are making what appear to me preposterous demands. I am in a weak position, as Lord Kitchener does not always support me, even in the presence of the Boers. I hope, therefore, that if strange proposals are made to you, though I should do my best to prevent it, H.M. Government will not answer in a hurry, so as to give me time to communicate to you my views fully. My own conviction is that the Boers are done for, and that if the Assembly at Vereeniging breaks up without peace they will surrender right and left. The men here are either personally anxious to upset negotiations or bluffing in reliance on our weakness, probably the latter.

On resuming in the afternoon, the Commissioners demanded three million pounds. Kitchener thought it "was rather a large sum," but after some minor points had been discussed, it was decided to embody it in an addendum to Article XI. Kitchener warned the Delegates that the extra two millions would probably be deducted from the sum allowed to re-establish farms. "But they did not mind this argument at all," he cabled to Brodrick, "and only wished receipts paid. I judge it is vital to peace to grant this as it stands." Indeed, the prestige of the Boer leaders with their countrymen, as well as their honour, was involved in their gaining this point.

A telegram to the Secretary of State was then drafted, containing the text of the Agreement. When it had once received the sanction

of H.M. Government, the Delegates undertook to submit it to the burghers, Hertzog making it clear that they were not committed to using their influence to get it accepted. Milner closed the proceedings by impressing upon the Delegates that this document superseded the Middelburg proposals : " They are absolutely dead, and if this document is agreed to finally and signed, no argument can ever be based on the difference between it and the Middelburg terms. This will then represent the whole understanding. There can be no attempt to explain this document by anything else than itself."

The following is the text of the document as it was then forwarded :

General Lord Kitchener of Khartoum, Commanding-in-Chief, and His Excellency Lord Milner, High Commissioner, on behalf of the BRITISH GOVERNMENT ; and

Messrs. S. W. Burger, F. W. Reitz, Louis Botha, J. H. De la Rey, L. J. Meyer and J. C. Krogh, acting as the Government of the SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC ; and Messrs. M. T. Steyn, J. C. Brebner, C. R. de Wet, J. B. M. Hertzog and C. Olivier, acting as the Government of the ORANGE FREE STATE,

on behalf of their respective BURGHERS desirous to terminate the present hostilities, agree on the following Articles.

1. The BURGHER forces in the Field will forthwith lay down their arms, handing over all Guns, Rifles, and Munitions of War, in their possession or under their control, and desist from any further resistance to the Authority of HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII whom they recognize as their lawful SOVEREIGN. The manner and details of this surrender will be arranged between Lord Kitchener and Commandant-General Botha, Assistant-Commandant-General De la Rey, and Chief Commandant De Wet.

2. Burghers in the field outside the limits of the Transvaal, or Orange River Colony, on surrendering will be brought back to their homes.

3. All Prisoners of War, at present outside of South Africa, who are burghers, will, on their declaring their acceptance of the position of subjects of His Majesty King Edward VII, be brought back to the places where they were domiciled before the War.

4. The Burghers so surrendering or returning will not be deprived of their personal liberty, or their property.

5. No Proceedings, civil or criminal, will be taken against any of the Burghers so surrendering or returning for any acts in connection with the prosecution of the War.

6. The Dutch language will be taught in Public Schools in the

Transvaal and in the Orange River Colony where the parents of the children desire it, and will be allowed in Courts of Law when necessary for the better and more effectual administration of Justice.

7. The possession of rifles will be allowed in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony to persons requiring them for their protection, on taking out a licence according to Law.

8. Military Administration in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony will at the earliest possible date be succeeded by civil Government and, as soon as circumstances permit, Representative Institutions, leading up to self-government, will be introduced.

9. The question of granting the Franchise to natives will not be decided until after the introduction of self-government.

10. No special tax will be imposed on landed property in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony to defray the expenses of the War.

11. A Judicial Commission will be appointed to which Government notes issued under Law No. I of 1900 of the South African Republic may be presented within six months. All such notes as are found to have been duly issued in the terms of that Law, and for which the persons presenting them have given valuable consideration, will be paid, but without interest.

12. As soon as conditions permit, a Commission, on which the local inhabitants will be represented, will be appointed in each district of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, under the Presidency of a Magistrate or other official, for the purpose of assisting the restoration of the people to their homes, and supplying those, who, owing to war losses, are unable to provide for themselves, with food, shelter, and the necessary amount of seed, stock, implements, etc., indispensable to the resumption of their normal occupations. Funds for this purpose will be advanced by Government free of interest and repayable over a period of years.

Addendum to Clause 11.

All receipts given by the Officers in the Field of the late Republics, or under their orders, may likewise be presented to the said Commission within six months, and if found to have been given *bona fide* for goods used by the Burgher Forces in the Field, will be paid out to the persons to whom they were originally given. The sum payable in respect of the said Government Notes and Receipts shall not exceed £3,000,000 sterling, and if the total amount of such notes and receipts approved by the Commission is more than that sum, there shall be a pro rata diminution. Facilities will be afforded the prisoners of war to present their government notes and receipts within the six months aforesaid.

Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

21/5/02. [PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL] . . . The proposal sent to War Office to-day is in some respects better than the terms of March 7 of last year. I do not altogether like the form of agreement, which is too much like a treaty, but on the other hand there is great advantage in getting whole personnel of so-called Governments to agree to Clause 1. This will undoubtedly have considerable effect, especially among prisoners, many of whom have all along declared their willingness to settle down, if their Governments gave in. I think, however, it would be well to give precision to the position by stipulating that all burghers, whether now surrendering or already prisoners, should take oath of allegiance. Boers will, I believe, accept this, if insisted on by H.M. Government. As regards other terms, language clause is much improved. Clause 5 is exceedingly sweeping, but I think practically wise. Clause 11 is detestable, and in my opinion in the nature of an audacious try on. I fought hard, but unsupported, to induce them to drop it, or at least not to seek to advance upon original million. As clause stands, we shall be virtually paying for conduct of war against us, and this extravagant liberality to enemy will certainly involve corresponding extravagance in dealing with compensation to loyalists and cost many millions. For all this Transvaal, that is to say, British in Transvaal, will have to pay. Clause 12 is not open to same objection. This sort of expenditure is both more useful, and will be less resented than millions paid to enemy for fighting us. The commissions in Clause 12 are my suggestion. I see advantage in bringing magistrates into first touch with their districts in discharge of a popular duty, and securing co-operation of leading burghers. Boer conduct of negotiations characterized by their usual trickiness. They deliberately abstained from all mention of amnesty to rebels, but no sooner was message sent to you, than they began to try and make subsidiary bargain on this point. I foresee that we are not by any means at the end of their dodges, and unless H.M. Government present them with sharp ultimatum at this juncture, I foresee that we shall go on chaffering and spending immense sums on maintenance of army, while they are getting through winter in comparative repose.

A week was spent whilst the terms were considered by the Cabinet, and the Cape Colony and Natal were consulted as to the treatment of rebels. Meanwhile Chamberlain and Milner overhauled the wording of the clauses, removing ambiguities which might create trouble in the future, and eliminating from the financial

clauses any recognition of the principle of compensation. But subsequently Milner bitterly regretted that he had yielded to the Boers over the Native Franchise (Clause 9), regarding this as the greatest mistake he had ever made. He never dreamed, of course, of putting natives on a par with whites in respect of political power. But "If I had known," he wrote, "as well as I know now the extravagance of the prejudice on the part of almost all the whites—not the Boers only—against any concession to any coloured man, however civilized, I should never have agreed to so absolute an exclusion, not only of the raw native, but of the whole coloured population from any rights of citizenship, even in municipal affairs." [1]

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to a Friend.

20/5/02. . . . Considering the extreme weakness of my hand, I . . . have been more successful than could be expected. That is to say, I have eliminated about 60 per cent of the preposterous demands of the Boers, and, as far as I can make out from messages at present being deciphered, "Joe" is busy at his end knocking off 20 per cent more. This is not so bad, *if you will go into "negotiations"* with a beaten enemy, who are the greatest bluffers in this mortal world. As a result I am rather pleased with myself—not pleased with the situation, mind you, but pleased *with myself*. And that is perhaps the most conclusive reason, why I ought to be *quick, quick*, to get out of public life. I feel, more than ever, that the whole weight of the Imperial cause in this part of the world rests on me, that I am bearing it *alone*. But so DOES SPRIGG. . . . My desire now is all and only for the big quiet things, "In the highlands, in the country places." I want travel—not too hurried—Books—not too many—a country home—I don't care where—not too big. I want Art, Music, of which I have been quite starved. . . . But neither Honours, Wealth, Society, nor Power have *any* spell for me, they never had *much*, any more. . . .

Telegram. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

22/5/02. Cabinet has not met, but I send you my personal impressions on terms which I think satisfactory on the whole. I do not like form, and would have preferred terms of surrender to what appear to be articles of peace. *Clause* 1. The words "whom they recognize as their lawful sovereign" might be accepted in place of a promise to take oath of allegiance. Do you attach importance to insisting on latter? I suppose we could ask for it

[1] Letter to Lord Selborne, 10/5/05, Milner Papers, XLII, iii, 131.

later, and make it condition of office or of assistance. If all the other articles are agreed to, it would not be worth while to cause delay about this. *Clause* 3. This may lead to recriminations. Is it clear that they will only be brought back at our convenience, and in batches selected by us? *Clause* 5. Is no exception to be made for acts contrary to usages of war? I think Botha agreed such an exception would be reasonable. Will not omission be regarded seriously in Colonies? *Clause* 7. The word "rifles" is vague. I suppose it does not commit us to allowing magazines. *Clause* 11. In accordance with my views in previous telegrams, I do not think a mere question of money should prevent termination of war, which costs more than a million per week. Lord Kitchener says it is a point of honour with leaders, that commandeering receipts should be paid, and that this condition is vital to peace, since Botha and De la Rey both insist. There should be some argument more cogent than the money cost to justify risking a failure on this point. Can you supply it, and would you go so far as to wreck agreement at this stage upon this one question? Reply immediately. You may quote any part of above to Lord Kitchener if you desire to do so.

Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

23/5/02. [*Reply to preceding*] *Clause* 3. It might be desirable to add a few words explaining that, while there will be no unnecessary delays, order and manner of return is entirely at discretion of H.M. Government. *Clause* 5. I see force of objection, but sense of security given by plenary amnesty is worth something. *Clause* 7. I think we are free to decide what kind of rifle we give them. *Clause* 11. This is a bad blot. It is not merely a question of money. Of all ways of giving money this is the worst. I should attach more weight to Lord Kitchener's view that it is vital to peace, if he had not used same argument with regard to every other Boer demand to which I have specially objected. But, though not vital, the gift of some money may be an important element in their decision. I believe, however, that, if H.M. Government were to say that, in principle, they could not recognize notes and requisitions of money, but as it was not a matter of money, they were prepared to spend two, or, if you like, three millions in giving burghers, including of course prisoners and surrendered men, a fresh start, and that this sum would be a free grant distributed as far as possible in proportion to total war losses of individual, and without prejudice to loan promised in Clause 12, this proposal would cheerfully be accepted. Commissions in Clause 12 should distribute grant. Obviously this would be much more advan-

tageous to Boers than present proposal, which will lead to endless swindling and often put money into wrong hands. Whatever you decide, it seems essential to put it to Boers as last word of H.M. Govt., to which burgher Assembly must say yes or no within ten days, and to preclude us from even discussing any alteration or addition.

Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

25/5/02. Referring to my previous telegram: The last paragraph expresses Lord Kitchener's views as much as mine. Differing as we have done on many points in the terms, we are in absolute agreement on the question of tactics. The Boers cannot resist the temptation to go on bargaining. It is in their bones. It is impossible quite to make out, who is for peace and who for war. But it is certain that those who are for war will play upon this bargaining instinct, if we leave them the slightest opening to raise fresh points and spin out discussion in order to get through the winter. The peace men will, I feel sure, welcome any attitude on the part of H.M. Government which compels a definite answer on an unalterable proposal. The points which Boers evidently value most are clauses 5, 11, and 12. Clause 11 remains bad, even if combined with 12, in the manner proposed. I believe that three millions will exceed the amount of notes and receipts which can pass muster, even including those which may be forged with sufficient cleverness. In that case we shall be paying in full for what the enemy have taken from their own people, and it will be impossible to refuse paying for what they have taken from neutrals and loyals to the last penny, including the commandeered gold. The new liability thus incurred is a very grave matter. To avoid this, without any appearance of haggling over a million more or less, H.M. Govt. might either (i) limit the amount for notes and receipts under clause 11 to 1 million, and give two millions as a free grant under clause 12; or (ii) strike out clause 11 altogether and give three millions under clause 12, allowing notes and receipts to be put in for what they were worth, as evidence of war losses. But while I should prefer either of these two plans to the original proposal, and do not myself believe that they would materially lessen the chance of a favourable vote of Burgher Assembly, I deprecate any change, unless H.M. Government is prepared to insist on it. Finality is everything.

Telegram. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

23/5/02. [CONFIDENTIAL] Cabinet had the suggested terms of surrender before them at meeting to-day and agree that they are an improvement on terms offered to Louis Botha on March 7,

1901. There are however a number of points which are not clear to us, and on which we desire some further explanations. *Clause* 1. We assume this includes the ammunition and arms which have been stored and concealed as well as those in possession of Burghers. Of course the word "Burghers," wherever used, means citizens of the late Republics. *Clause* 2. Does this apply only to burghers in Cape Colony? *Clause* 3. Of course it would be impossible and disastrous to people concerned for prisoners to be brought home at once. We assume that you have made it clear they must return in batches, as transport can be arranged, and provision made for their proper subsistence in the country, and that process will necessarily take some time. They would have to declare their acceptance of position as subjects in writing, and perhaps by taking the oath of allegiance. *Clause* 5. We assume this refers to acts of war properly so called, and not to acts contrary to usages of war which, you will remember, were excluded by Botha from amnesty. *Clause* 7. Is it intended to allow any burghers to have magazine or Mauser rifles? We think it would be sufficient to allow Martini-Henrys. *Clause* 9. Seems to be worded so that we should actually have to exclude natives from the Franchise in any constitution establishing a self-governing Colony. Would it not be enough to leave out from after (?) "until" to end, and insert "the introduction of representative government"? *Clause* 11. This raises a very serious issue. We should not allow the expenditure of two or three millions more or less to stand in the way of peace, but it is plain that we could not give better terms to Boer farmers who have given supplies in exchange for receipts, than to loyal subjects whose goods have been seized without receipts. We should therefore let in very large and indefinite claims, and it would be difficult to distinguish between seizures of stock and those stores and gold which were commandeered at the beginning of the war. It can hardly be justifiable to compensate an enemy for supplies which he may have willingly offered, and to leave a loyal man whose goods have been forcibly confiscated without redress. In no case should we be willing to compensate foreign importers who may have carried munitions of war to our enemies. The objections to this clause would no doubt be modified if it were combined with Clause 12, and it was promised that notes or receipts *bona fide* in possession of burghers should be accepted by Government in payment of sums advanced for rehousing and restocking farms. Communicate this to Lord Kitchener.

Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

25/5/02. In reply to points raised: *Clause* 1. As I understand, the words "under their control" include all arms and ammunition

known to the persons surrendering. The word "Burghers" applies to the citizens of the late Republics. *Clause* 2. Yes. *Clause* 3. Delegates quite understand that return must be gradual. I think we are free to prescribe form in which declaration shall be made. *Clause* 5. All crimes in any way connected with war are covered, but not crimes committed during war and unconnected with military operations. Boers, however, repudiate any desire to screen criminals, and will agree to cases now known to Commander-in-Chief being excepted. What they are afraid of is fresh cases being brought up afterwards, and fear and suspicion thus aroused keeping the country in unrest. I feel the force of this. Following addition to clause, if inserted by H.M. Government, would be accepted by Boers. *Begins:* "The benefit of this clause will not extend to certain acts contrary to the usages of war, which have been notified by the C.-in-C. to the Boer Generals and which shall be tried by Court Martial immediately after the close of hostilities." *Clause* 7. I understand that Lord Kitchener has telegraphed to Commander-in-Chief about this. *Clause* 9. Yes. That would be the object of the clause. Change suggested by you would defeat that object. It would be better to leave out clause altogether than propose tying our hands as to future. I think there is much to be said for leaving question of political rights of natives to be settled by Colonists themselves. *Clause* 10. Mineral rights are not included. *Clause* 11. I do not see any answer to the objection you urge. In order to meet the suggestion as to combining this clause with clause 12, the following suggestion has been made: Strike out clause 11 altogether and last sentence of clause 12 and add to clause 12 after "occupations" the following. *Begins:* "Burghers who are in possession of notes issued under Law No. 1 of 1900 of the S.A.R., or of receipts for goods delivered during the war, after such notes and receipts have been approved by a judicial commission, which shall be appointed and to which such claims must be presented within six months, will be paid either in kind or money up to a total not exceeding £3,000,000, and if the total amount of such notes and receipts approved by the Commission exceeds 3 millions, there shall be a *pro rata* diminution. In other cases, where the Government advance funds for the above purposes, such funds shall be advanced free of interest and repayable over a period of years. No foreigners or rebels will be entitled to the benefit of this clause." *Ends.* Boers would accept this.[1] It does not get over the difficulties you point out to clause 11, but it does combine clauses 11 and 12. In conclusion, I desire to say that

[1] Smuts and Hertzog had approved of this amendment when it was read to them on May 24 (Milner Papers, XLIX, iv, 36).

Lord Kitchener and I are absolutely agreed that a point has now been reached when the further protraction of the negotiations can only do harm. The terms proposed have been exhaustively discussed, and we have now given the fullest explanations of them of which we are capable. We therefore beg to urge that H.M. Govt. after considering the position by the light of these explanations, should decide what it is prepared to agree to, and send us a message to give to the delegates, which shall both appear and be intended to be final, and which shall preclude further discussion. It is important that this message should clearly state that what H.M. Govt. consent to is the submission of a particular document, viz. the draft agreement in the form which you now give to it, to the Burgher Assembly at Vereeniging for acceptance or rejection, on the understanding that, if accepted as it stands by them, it will be accepted as it stands by us, but that no proposals for its modification will be entertained.

Chamberlain inquired (May 26), whether any promise had been made with regard to the banishment of leaders under the proclamation of August 7. Milner replied :

Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

27/5/02. No promises have been made or asked for. The Boers no doubt are aware that legislation is required to give effect to the banishment, and feel that, if Article 3 of the proposed agreement is accepted, we could not introduce such legislation. This is obvious, and it follows that, if surrender comes off, banishment will be tacitly dropped. I was in favour of banishment proclamation, and was prepared to go even further, as I thought, and still think, that the resistance of the Boers at that stage had ceased to be legitimate, and that it was our duty to impose special penalties upon those responsible for the adoption of the guerilla methods, which were ruining the country and by which alone the struggle could be kept up at all. So far from regretting the Proclamation, I believe it has had great effect in increasing the number of surrenders, and inducing the Boers still in the field to desist from further fighting. That has certainly been Lord Kitchener's opinion, as he has always pressed for and given the greatest publicity to the lists of the banished leaders. But if the Boers now give in in a body, and live as loyal subjects, it would be a mistake to continue a proscription, which would only keep up bitter feelings and tend to prevent the country from settling down. Lord Kitchener entirely agrees.

Then, on May 27, Chamberlain cabled to Milner the final

form of the agreement as approved by H.M. Government, for "submission to the Assembly at Vereeniging for a Yes or No vote." There were two small alterations to Clauses 2, 3 and 5. The two former clauses were thrown into one, providing that burghers and prisoners of war, on accepting the status of British subjects, would be brought back to their homes, "as soon as transport and means of existence can be ensured." To Clause 5, now Clause 4, was added an exception, excluding from the amnesty persons guilty of acts contrary to the usages of war. This addition had been approved by Smuts and Hertzog, when it was read to them on the 24th (Milner Papers, XLIX, iv, 36–8). Clauses 11 and 12 were also amended and combined into one (Clause 10), which now ran as follows:

Clause 11 *and* 12 must be omitted and following clause substituted: "As soon as conditions permit, a Commission, on which the local inhabitants will be represented, will be appointed in each district of Transvaal and Orange River Colony under the presidency of a magistrate or other official for the purpose of assisting the restoration of the people to their homes and supplying those who, owing to war losses, are unable to provide for themselves, with food, shelter and the necessary amount of seed, stock, implements, etc., indispensable to the resumption of their normal occupations. H.M. Government will place at the disposal of these Commissions a sum of £3,000,000 sterling for the above purposes, and will allow all notes, issued under Law No. 1 of 1900 of the Government of the South African Republic, and all receipts, given by officers in the field of the late Republics or under their orders, to be presented to a Judicial Commission, which will be appointed by the Government, and if such notes and receipts are found by this Commission to have been duly issued in return for valuable considerations, they will be received by the first-named Commissions as evidence of war losses suffered by the persons to whom they were originally given. In addition to the above-named free grant of three million pounds, H.M. Government will be prepared to make advances as loans for the same purposes, free of interest for two years, and afterwards repayable over a period of years with three per cent interest. No foreigner or rebel will be entitled to the benefit of this clause."

"This clause," Chamberlain explained in his cable to Milner of May 27, "is drawn up so as to prevent excessive and fraudulent applications, and is consistent with suggestion in yours of May 23, which you thought Boers would cheerfully accept, and almost identical with suggestion two in yours of May 25" (Milner Papers,

XLIX, iv, 49). "In making this communication to Delegates you must inform them that, if this opportunity of an honourable termination of hostilities is not accepted within a time fixed by you, the Conference will be considered at an end, and His Majesty's Government will not be bound in any way by the present declarations."

It will be seen, then, that by the final form of Clause 10, the principle of compensation was practically eliminated. A free gift of three million pounds, supplemented by loans on very generous terms, was to be applied by local Committees in bringing back the people to their farms, and on the relief of those who had been reduced to poverty by war losses. Notes and receipts found to be valid by a judicial Commission were to be accepted as proof of such losses. By the use of the term "people," not only the fighting Boers, but also those who had surrendered or sided with the British, including the National Scouts, were entitled to apply for relief; and of these only such as had been reduced to poverty through their faith in the Boer leaders. No burgher who was still in a position to resume his previous calling had any claim to relief.

A further communication was to be made to the Delegates as to the treatment of rebels:

Telegram. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

27/5/02. We understand that the terms of surrender offered in my telegram of to-day are confined to burghers of the South African Republic and Orange River Colony at the date of the outbreak of war. H.M. Government are unable to make any pledges on behalf of the Cape or Natal Governments as to the treatment of rebels who return to those Colonies. You have no doubt kept in mind that any favourable terms accorded by either of those Governments will have to be sanctioned by the Legislature of the Colony. H.M. Government must place it on record that the treatment of Cape and Natal Colonials who have been in rebellion and who now surrender will, if they return to their Colonies, be determined by the Colonial Governments and in accordance with the laws of the Colonies, and that any British subjects who have joined the enemy will be liable to trial under the law of that part of the British Empire to which they belong. H.M. Government are informed by the Cape Government that the following are their views as to the terms which should be granted to British subjects of the Cape Colony, who are now in the field, or who have surrendered, or have been captured since April 12, 1901. With regard to rank and file, they should all, upon surrender, after giving up their arms, sign a document before

the Resident Magistrate of the District in which surrender takes place, acknowledging themselves guilty of High Treason, and that the punishment to be awarded to them, provided they shall not have been guilty of murder or other acts contrary to usages of civilized warfare, should be that they shall not be entitled for life to be registered as voters, or to vote at any Parliamentary divisional council or municipal election. . . . With reference to Justices of the Peace and Field Cornets of the Cape Colony and all other persons holding an official position under the Government of the Cape Colony, or who may occupy the position of Commandant of rebel or burgher forces, they should be tried for High Treason before the ordinary Court of the country, or such special Court as may be hereafter constituted by law, the punishments for their offence to be left to the discretion of the Court with this proviso, that in no case shall penalty of death be inflicted. The Natal Government are of opinion that rebels should be dealt with according to the law of the Colony.

The wisdom of Milner's insistence upon the finality of the terms offered, was quickly shown when they were read to the Delegates on May 28. After discussion on the time limit to be fixed for the decision of the Assembly, the Boer love of a bargain once more asserted itself. Botha began to angle for liberty to delete some of the Articles altogether, if the Assembly should so desire it. Milner cut the attempt short. "This is an absolutely final document, and the answer must be Yes or No." Three days were allowed for that answer.

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

28/5/02. Lord Kitchener and I met the Boer Delegates again this morning, when I communicated to them the alterations and additions to their draft, and informed them that H.M. Government approved of the draft so altered being submitted to the Burghers at Vereeniging for a Yes or No answer, and added that if this opportunity of an honourable termination of hostilities was not accepted within a time fixed by us, the Conference would be considered at an end, and H.M. Government would not be bound in any way by the present declarations. At the same time I handed them a copy of the draft agreement amended in accordance with your instructions. There was no discussion of it. Lord Kitchener stated that, before fixing definitely the time by which we must receive an answer, he would like to know their opinion. He thought 48 hours would be ample, but he did not wish to rush them. The Delegates, who, it was agreed, should return to Vereeniging this evening, asked for an adjournment before giving

an answer as to time. We agreed to this. Before they left I read them a statement based on your telegram of May 27. I was obliged slightly to modify your message, in order to bring it into harmony with the latest communication I have received from the Cape Government on the subject, according to which fresh legislation will not be necessary ; but essential points, viz. : the degrees of punishment to be awarded and the classification of rebels, were given absolutely in your words. The Delegates asked for a copy of my statement, which I handed to them. The meeting then adjourned. We met the Delegates again this afternoon for a few minutes. They asked us to give them till Saturday night for their answer, to which we agreed. We then shook hands and parted. They returned to Vereeniging at 9 p.m.

At Vereeniging, Steyn gave vent to one last torrent of denunciation before resigning the Presidency. He nominated De Wet to act in his stead. Once more the Free Staters, led by De Wet, Kemp, Muller and Nieuwhoudt appeared irreconcilable. But Hertzog hinted at the necessity of peace, and once more the Transvaal leaders, Botha, Burger and Smuts, drove the argument home. The latter concluded his speech on a new note. The present sacrifice of independence might, he suggested, only be a step towards a greater future. Perhaps it was God's will " to lead our Nation through defeat, through abasement, yea, through the valley of the shadow of death, to the glory of a nobler future, to the light of a brighter day."

Two significant admissions as to the origin of the war were made in the course of the debate. " Undoubtedly," said Schalk Burger, " we began this war strong in the faith of God, but there were also one or two other things to rely upon. We had considerable confidence in our own weapons ; we underestimated the enemy ; the fighting spirit had seized upon our people ; and the thought of victory had banished that of the possibility of defeat."

" I am one of those," said General Smuts, " who, as members of the Government of the South African Republic, provoked the war with England."

There were signs of a split in the Free State ranks before the meeting adjourned. Next morning Botha and De la Rey appealed to De Wet to secure a unanimous vote. At last he gave way, and made a dramatic declaration for peace. The motion was carried by 54 votes to 6, in the form of a reasoned protest, declaring that acceptance of the British terms was due to the impossibility of gaining a

victory. The Commissioners returned to Pretoria, and Milner at "Sunnyside" received a telephone message from Kitchener, "It is Peace." He rushed off to Pretoria, and there, just before 11 p.m. on May 31, the terms of peace were signed by Milner, Kitchener, and all the Boer Delegates, De Wet's name taking the place of Steyn's in the original document of May 21, with Hertzog next.

In a wise and dignified Open Letter to their people (May 31), Burger and Botha urged them to acquiesce in the peace, conduct themselves peaceably and quietly, and to obey and respect the new Government. "There is now peace," they concluded. "Let us learn to forget and forgive."

Throughout the discussions with the Delegates Milner had aimed at precision and finality. He set his face against the awkward promises and half-promises which Kitchener was too ready to make. He repeatedly insisted that all points which the Boers wished to raise must be put in writing, and that "everything to which the Government is asked to bind itself should appear in this document, and nothing else." And again, "This document must contain everything about which there is anything in the form of a pledge." All other proposals were annulled by it, and it was to be construed by itself. How valuable was this insistence on definition was soon to be proved. Within three months the Boer leaders were in London, after a campaign upon the Continent, in which they entirely ignored the generous provision which had been made for the rehabilitation of the Boer people, and were asking the British Government to reopen the discussion. Thanks to Milner's clear pronouncements at the Conference, Chamberlain was able to refuse to discuss what he described as proposals for "an entirely new agreement, some of which had been rejected at Pretoria, while others were not even mentioned there" (28/8/02, Cd. 1284).

Telegram. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

5/6/02. . . . I understand the free grant of £3,000,000 in the last clause of the terms of surrender is intended to be applicable to all people, loyalists as well as burghers, and not to burghers only. I am answering question in House of Commons about Indian subjects in this sense to-day, but it has been suggested that Boers may have assumed "people" in terms of surrender to mean burghers only.

Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

6/6/02. No. I certainly understood and meant three millions for Boers including, of course, the surrendered and friendly ones.

I am sure the whole Assembly was of that opinion. As we certainly shall have to spend that amount in restarting a population, whose total capital loss cannot be less than 20 to 30 millions, I most strongly urge that we should interpret it in this sense from the first, and not produce a bad impression, which would be given by appearance of trying to slip out of it. Loyalists must be provided for separately.

Seventeen years later, at Versailles, General Botha, in the course of a moving speech in which he joined with Lord Milner in an appeal for treating the German nation with moderation, paused, and laid his hand upon Milner's shoulder. " Seventeen years ago," he said, " my friend and I made peace at Vereeniging—it was a bitter peace for us, bitter hard. We lost all for which we had fought—our independence, our flag, our country. But we turned our thoughts and efforts then to saving our people ; and they, the victors, helped us. It was a hard peace for us to accept, but as I know it now, when time has shown us the truth, it was not unjust—it was a generous peace that the British people made with us, and that is why we stand with them to-day side by side in the cause which has brought us all together." . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to a Friend.

30/5/02. . . . We got back from Pretoria on Thursday. It has been an awful ten days, but I saved more than I expected. . . . I see things as they are, and recognize that it's a fool's trick to waste the energy and devotion of 1,000 men in trying to do the impossible, and to keep an Empire for people who are dead set on chucking it away. I could wrestle with Boers for ever. But British infatuation is too much for me. What with our sentimentality, our party system, our Government by Committee, our " Mandarins," our " Society " and our Generals . . . the game is just hopeless. It's rather hard on the nation, a sound-hearted nation as ever was, but that's not enough. . . . Our political organization is thoroughly rotten, almost non-existent. It is Carthaginian—really the only comparison I can think of. Never was there such an absurd waste of power, such ridiculous inconsequence of policy—not for want of men, but for want of any effective central authority, or dominant idea, to make them work together. Joe is a strong man. Under other stars, he might be as big as Cavour or Bismarck. But all he can do is to maintain himself. K. is a strong man, but all he is doing is to paralyse me. Rosebery is not a strong man, certainly. But he is a singularly gifted one. Yet his influence has, in the main, been exceedingly mischievous. He has ruined the Liberal Imperialist movement by

putting himself at the head of it, I can't say *leading* it, for he is incapable of leading anything. Finally there are all your " clever " men, engaged in aggravating the general confusion and aimlessness of educated opinion. After all, the only people who know their own minds and constantly, if with a pathetic feebleness, strive in the same direction, are our poor old South African loyalists. . . . 31/5/02. I have just come from signing the terms of surrender—surely one of the strangest documents in history. Oddly enough it was just this day 3 years ago . . . that the ill-fated Bloemfontein Conference met. . . . If anything could make me relent towards Boers, it was the faces of some of the men who sat round the table to-night. There was no mistaking the fact that some of them felt it deeply, with all their characteristic self-possession. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

15/6/02. Pretoria. . . . " Chaos and ancient night " were luminous and orderly compared with the state of affairs here. Everybody wanting something done at once, and screaming like mad if it wasn't. So that I " burned the midnight oil " night after night and am perfectly bewildered to find the week has gone—I don't quite know how, in roaring confusion and scurry. . . . The surrender, brilliantly organized by K.—the sort of thing at which he is a master—has gone marvellously. I owe two apologies to " brother Boer." One, I must apologize to him for having underestimated his numbers. You know I always stuck to it that we had 70,000 and *rather more* against us—first and last, not all at one moment—excluding rebels. Well, now it turns out we had *80,000* and *rather more*, first and last. So I have been consistently about 10,000 wrong throughout. . . . Second apology to B.B. ; his discipline and organization have been better kept up than we had any idea of. On the other hand, I prove to have been quite right in thinking that the Boers were absolutely done for. The state in which they have come in, to say nothing of the alacrity and almost wild joy with which they have thrown up the sponge, show clearly that they could by no possibility have kept it up any longer. They had not more than 6 weeks' fight in them, as a body, and we should have made ourselves eternally ridiculous, if we had given away the future to save further fighting, and then found there was nothing left to save. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Selborne to Lord Milner.

6/6/02. My dear Milner, or should I not rather call you " Hercules." Your second labour is ended ; the third (and last in South Africa) is about to commence ; but is it not the biggest of all ? . . . There never was real danger of a bad peace, because

the Prime Minister was solid as a rock behind you and Chamberlain on this subject. Nevertheless it is to you we owe Peace *now* without folly or dishonour. . . .

Extract from Letter. [*Sir*] *J. Rose-Innes to Lord Milner.*

1/6/02. I hope you will not consider that I am taking a liberty if I tender to Your Excellency very hearty congratulations at the happy termination of one stage of your great work in South Africa. . . . In the work which lies before Your Excellency it must be a consolation to remember that you enjoy the confidence of the vast majority of the King's loyal subjects in South Africa, to an extent which is absolutely unique. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

2/6/02. . . . I am satisfied with the terms of surrender as they now stand, as I believe that the alteration in clauses 11–12 will prevent the consequences that you feared. I congratulate you on the result. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

28/6/02. The King has been pleased to approve of Lord Salisbury's recommendation that you should be advanced to the position of Viscount of the United Kingdom in consideration of your services to the Empire, and especially in connection with the termination of hostilities. In sincerely congratulating you on this mark of royal favour I desire to add how greatly I appreciate the valuable work performed by you during a period of altogether exceptional strain and anxiety.

" History," so Sir Charles Lucas concludes his account of the struggle, " will cherish the names of men, British and Dutch, who on either side were worthy protagonists of their cause. Those who hold that, so far as there is right and wrong in human actions, English lives and money were spent that wrong should be righted, that the crooked should be made straight, and that a goodlier future should grow out of a tortuous and unlovely past, will insist upon the debt which is due to the two Statesmen who, one in England and the other in South Africa, saw straight, faced the facts and made their countrymen face them ; who, with everything to deter and discourage them in the record of past dealings with South Africa, determined that there should be an end to those dealings, and steadfast in time of disaster, saw the crisis through, to a definite and unambiguous issue."[1]

[1] Sir Charles Lucas, " Historical Geography of South Africa," II, p. 405.

CHAPTER X

Reconstruction and Repatriation

THE moment had now come for which Viscount Milner, as he now was, had so long been waiting and preparing. For the next three years he threw himself into the Herculean task of " repairing the ravages of war and restarting the New Colonies on a higher plane of civilization."[1] Primarily he had to deal with the legacy of confusion left behind by the corrupt and incompetent administration—" the Calvinistic Tammany " as an American writer termed it, which had brought disaster upon the old kingdom of Kruger and his Hollander friends. With extraordinary vigour and grip Milner tackled a whole series of schemes and problems, the completion of any one of which would have imparted distinction to the career of an ordinary Governor. In the spirit of his Johannesburg Speech (Ch. VIII, *fin.*), he devoted himself to the rapid development of the parts, agricultural and industrial, with a view both to the increase of a British population and the prosperity of the whole. Agriculturally, the soil of South Africa is poor. To render it fruitful, it needed capital for irrigation, expert farming, and improved transport. Capital for this purpose could only be provided by the industrial activity of the Rand, whence could be drawn the " overspill "[2] of revenue, of population, and of demand for produce, which would render agriculture prosperous and raise it out of the rut of stagnation, in which the Boer farmers had been content to allow it to remain. Rapid expansion of the gold output was therefore the governing factor of the whole problem.

In later days, former enemies and critics were able to survey more dispassionately the remains of the great work which Milner accomplished, and which they had done their utmost to wreck. They were ready then to confess that it was due to his wisdom and foresight and driving power that science and system supplanted

[1] Speech at Johannesburg, March 31, 1905.
[2] Lord Milner to Intercolonial Council, Cd. 2027.

administrative and industrial chaos, and were enforced by him in accordance with his principles of efficiency and practical justice. Above all, the introduction of scientific agriculture into the new Colonies was wholly due to Milner's inspiration. For he recognized that it is the workers and inheritors of the land who rule it, and that it is the soil which is the true permanent source of wealth in a country. The gold and minerals of the Rand are a dwindling asset. The fundamental fact of life remains the farm. The pen may be sometimes mightier than the sword ; the spade in the long run always is. It is now at last being realized that the abandonment of Milner's plans for irrigation and scientific farming and afforestation, which followed on the political *volte-face* of 1906, is largely responsible for the conditions of drought and deterioration from which land in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony is suffering.

It was typical of the thoroughness and understanding with which Milner entered upon this task, that, in the matter of rebuilding farms and farm-houses, he did his utmost to encourage good architecture. For he realized, as Cecil Rhodes had also done, that good homes promote a love of country.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. W. E. Davidson.

27/8/02. . . . Thanks for sending me a copy of your letter to Potchefstroom about Town Lands for our experimental Farm. I am extremely anxious to get this thing started soon. Enclosed are Smith's [1] proposals for starting the Farm. I think they are on the right lines, and that the sums asked for, though large, are not excessive. . . . Of course such a thing can never be a paying concern, but, if run on sufficiently liberal lines, it should be a great blessing to the country. . . .

We have seen that machinery had been installed ready to set the administration in motion along the lines of policy so clearly outlined in Chapter VIII. Only the road must first be cleared of the block caused by the military administration, the removal of troops, and the repatriation of refugees and Boer prisoners ; and the wheels of progress must first be greased by grant or guarantee of funds for land settlement and development. Milner lost not a moment. Within a few days of the conclusion of peace, he obtained from the Secretary of State (June 2–4),

[1] Mr. F. B. Smith, C.M.G., the eminent agriculturist, was Agricultural Adviser to Lord Milner (1902), and Director of Agriculture for the Transvaal (1902–10).

permission to promulgate an act imposing a 10 per cent tax upon profits from the mining industry. The effect of this act was both to relieve the mining industry from doubts and anxieties as to its liabilities, and to derive from it for the benefit of the State a large and expanding revenue.[1]

A fortnight later Chamberlain gave general approval to a scheme drawn up by Milner for the repatriation of the Boers, and conditions for leasing and selling lands to British settlers, explained in his despatch of May 9 (Ch. VIII). Immediate funds for these purposes were released when, upon Milner's urgent personal appeal to Chamberlain, he was authorized to expend up to half a million pounds on these items,[2] in anticipation of a development loan (June 6–13).

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

2/6/02. . . . We can pay for all normal expenditure and the 6,000 South African Constabulary out of revenue. But as you know, there is nothing provided for the various extraordinary items which have been hitherto financed out of the £500,000 grant for relief and resettlement. In all my estimates I have relied on a loan for this. As I understand, loan is deferred, and Chancellor of Exchequer proposes to advance sums required from time to time from Treasury. As £500,000 is nearly exhausted, and it would be disastrous if land settlement, which latter is at last making good progress, were stopped, especially at this juncture, I would ask for immediate authority to spend another £500,000 on these purposes. . . . I earnestly hope that there may be no delay in acceding to this request. The work to be got through in the immediate future is so enormous that unless we can get fundamental questions, independent of finance, settled promptly, a breakdown is inevitable. It would be a great relief to my mind to feel that services already started and working well were provided for at least for some months ahead, before I plunge into new and heavy job of restoring Boer population, which will require all my attention in the immediate future.

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

9/6/02. . . . My sole reliance is on you personally for obtaining the amount of loan which we require for our own purposes.

[1] Cd. 1163. The report of the Commission appointed to consider the Gold Laws was issued in June. The tax levied on net produce was estimated to yield £500,000 per annum at first, and more in the future (Milner Papers, XLVIII, iii, 105).

[2] Cd. 1163.

The Treasury is certain to try and pinch us, and if this is done it will be an absolutely irretrievable mistake. The next year or eighteen months may well decide the whole future. Our aim should be to get on as fast as possible with all recuperative work. This will both keep up prestige of Government, and help to keep in this country the thousands of splendid and willing British settlers, who are anxious to find employment here. Despite the present gush, a British population is our only ultimate safeguard, and just now we have our pick of the Empire for almost every industry as well as for the land. The great thing is to restart the machine in time to catch them. Of course, the great bulk will stay, if they stay at all, in private employment, but the pace at which private capital gets to work will depend materially, and in many cases depends entirely, on what Govt. does at once. When we spoke on this subject last year, I felt that you were in agreement with my general view and believe you still are. If you could come to this country, and see for yourself both its splendid opportunities and its total lack of equipment for making use of them, except what private enterprise has supplied in the mines, you would be altogether on our side. There is nothing I wish more than that you could come. But at a distance and with the enormous mass of your other responsibilities, it is more difficult to realize how necessary prompt action is, or what a trifle a million or two more is in view of the interests at stake. . . .

Extract from Telegram. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

10/6/02. [MOST URGENT. PRIVATE AND SECRET] . . . I will do my best and hope to succeed.

Thus to the ordinary administrative business of a Colonial Governor was added, in Milner's case, the task of creating a new world in South Africa. The first steps were the organization of repatriation and, to that end, of a railway system thrown out of gear and partly destroyed by the war. A large part of the industrial population had already returned in pursuance of the policy of starting the mines and settling the Transvaal, upon which Milner had insisted. But thousands still remained in the Refugee Camps. At the same time 155,000 Boers, men, women, and children, and their 100,000 native labourers had to be brought back from the Concentration Camps to a country the size of the British Isles and stripped bare of live stock and farm buildings. Food and necessaries for these had to be brought from overseas, and carried with them over a single line of railway for a thousand miles.[1]

[1] Cd. 1551, and Report of Repatriation Department, 1906.

For some weeks after the Peace was signed, Milner was fully occupied with the transfer of stores and transport from the military to the civil authorities for these purposes. Riding backwards and forwards from Johannesburg and Pretoria, he had repeated arguments with Kitchener on the point. For Kitchener, busy organizing the surrender of the commandos and the return of troops, was unwilling to allow transport to pass out of his control. Moreover, the military used their complete monopoly of transport and stores to exact famine prices from the civil authorities. This ludicrous piece of departmental folly was perpetrated in the supposed interests of the War Office. It was exasperating beyond words to a man like Milner, who took the broader view of Imperial needs and resources ; and it led ultimately to waste both of time and stores. For the military stores could not be sold at the famine prices demanded. After being withheld when wanted, they were sold at an enormous sacrifice, when they had deteriorated. But for vehicles and animals Kitchener had the civilians at his mercy, and Milner could not beat him down from his monopoly prices.

The urgent need of avoiding delay and overlapping in allotting compensation for damage and requisitions during the war, and deciding the relative liabilities of the funds for repatriation, compensation for war losses, and land settlement, prompted Milner to take early steps for setting up a Central Committee to deal with claims under the repatriation grant and secure fair play and uniformity of treatment in the two Colonies (Milner Papers, XIX, iii, 65 ; XXXII, i, 13).

By the 10th Article of the Peace of Vereeniging a free grant of £3,000,000 was to be placed at the disposal of local Commissions for the purpose of assisting the restoration of the people to their homes, and supplying those who, owing to war losses, were unable to provide for themselves. Claims for notes issued by the South African Republic, and receipts given in the field, were to be considered by them, and presented to a Judicial Commission. Local Commissions, including Boer representatives, were duly constituted for these purposes. But Botha protested when Boers who had taken the British side were included in the Transvaal Commissions (Cd. 1284, *see below*, p. 376). In order to hasten the progress of repatriation and restoration of the farms, it was decided, at Milner's instance, not to await the adjustment of claims, but to repatriate first and to grant relief at once. The cost was to be treated as an advance against the grants or loans promised in the 10th Article.

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

10/6/02. Following is outline of my scheme for carrying out Clause 10 of terms surrender : Assistance must be given immediately, whereas distribution £3,000,000 will take time. I propose that Local Commissions shall in first instance supply returning farmers as fast as possible with minimum necessary to make fresh start. Assistance will as a rule be given in kind, but occasionally some cash may be necessary. Account will be kept of every man so assisted, and he will be charged cost price. At the same time he will be allowed to put in claim for war losses supported, wherever he has them, by documents such as notes and receipts, and in absence of them, by the best evidence he can supply. Local Commissions will send up these claims with a report on each to Central Commission, which will give credit to claimant for full value of losses which they regard as proved. When all such claims have been added up, the £3,000,000 minus cost of administration, will be distributed between them *pro rata*. The amount allotted to every claimant will be deducted from the account against him for goods or money supplied, and the balance will be his debt to the State, which will be made a charge on his property and be repayable on the terms laid down in conditions of surrender. . . .

Milner concluded by outlining the machinery by which he was preparing to carry out his scheme without delay.

The effect of this wise and generous step, which undoubtedly prevented widespread distress among the repatriated farmers, was that the Boers received free grants largely in excess of the promised three millions. Advances made in cash and stores finally amounted to £5,481,783. In October a Central Judicial Commission was appointed, with Major T. M. McInerney [1] as Chairman, to which all claims were ultimately brought. The final report of the Commission, presented in February, 1906, showed that it had investigated 63,079 claims, some of them incredibly fantastic, and distributed a sum of £9,500,000.[2]

In the first place, the meaning of the word " people " in the

[1] Major McInerney had served with an Australian Corps during the war. He performed an immensely difficult and onerous task with conspicuous success. Milner wrote of him : " He is a perfect tiger for work, has a clear grasp of principle and phenomenal memory for detail ; he is a great economist and excellent organizer, as straight as a die, and perfectly fearless in the discharge of his duty "

[2] Cd. 3028 ; G. B. Beak, " The Aftermath of War."

Treaty had to be decided. It might have included British residents (*v.* p. 363). It was decided, however, to assess the grant of three millions among the ex-burghers of the two Republics, on whichever side they had fought, and in proportion to their proved war losses. For although the principle of compensation had been avoided in the Treaty, administration of the several funds by the same Commission led to the grant of £3,000,000 being distributed more and more from the point of view of compensation for war losses, rather than of charitable relief. Thus, claims by burghers who did not need Government assistance, but could prove war losses, were also admitted.

Ultimately, credit for relief received from the Repatriation Commissions, or payment for proved war losses, was granted to all ex-burghers up to £25. The balance of the three millions was then distributed *pro rata* among those whose proved losses exceeded that amount.

In addition to these free grants, loans to the amount of nearly £3,000,000 were lent in accordance with the promise made in Article 10 of the Peace Treaty. Apart from these sums, in which British subjects had no share, £2,000,000 were voted by the Imperial Parliament to compensate them, as well as neutral foreign subjects and natives, for losses suffered through the war. Nor was this all. There were large claims against the War Office for goods requisitioned during the war, for which receipts had been given, and for compensation for war losses to ex-burghers on the strength of specific promises made to them. Some of these ex-burghers had given active assistance to the British troops ; others had surrendered on the promise of protection in Lord Roberts's Proclamations. After some delay, four and a half millions were handed over by the War Office to the civil authorities for the settlement of the outstanding claims. After the receipts had been honoured, the remaining £1,900,000 were allotted to the claims of the "protected burghers," at the rate of 10 shillings in the pound. Milner summarized the expenditure of the funds on the relief of the ex-burghers in three long despatches, Nov., Dec., 1904.

To these amounts must be added an expenditure of over six and a half millions incurred by the Colonial Governments on repatriation.

Thus, at a cost of some sixteen and a half millions, the stupendous task of reinstating a whole nation was accomplished with marvellous efficiency and promptitude, and a generosity unexampled in the

history of any nation.[1] It was not rewarded by the gratitude it deserved. For the Boers, having persuaded themselves that the grant of three millions was to be paid in compensation for war losses, to which they were entitled as an indemnity, apart from any money spent on their repatriation and relief, regarded the sums awarded to them as insufficient payments of debts legally due to them.[2] Their discontent was deliberately increased for political ends by some of the Boer leaders and *predikants*, who criticized every possible and impossible detail in the work of repatriation, the distribution of relief, and payment of compensation.

Though materially necessary, and in most cases just, the payment of compensation was not an unmixed blessing. Looking back upon its effects, indeed, Milner came to the conclusion that psychologically it was somewhat demoralizing :

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

13/3/05. . . . Compensation has, on the whole, been rather a curse than a blessing. You give a man a pound, and he hates you for it, because he asked for four and expected two, and all his neighbours, who have not got anything, hate you equally.[3] People sit with their hands in their laps, and when you want to know why they are not bestirring themselves, they tell you they are waiting for compensation. Never was there a more demoralizing waste of money. No doubt something had to be done, and it has certainly been done with immense care and industry. But at the end of all things, the best that can be said about compensation is that we begin to see the close of the process. God be praised for that. . . .

The process of restoring the Boers to their farms was delayed by the difficulty of providing them with draught animals. As in Natal and Rhodesia, scarcity of labour retarded progress,[4] delaying

[1] Tribute is paid in the Repatriation Despatch of March 14 to the great work done by Major E. H. Leggett in organizing Burgher Land Settlements for "bywoners" (the "poor-white" class of tenant farmers, who possessed no lands of their own) and ex-burghers who had fought on the British side (Cd. 1551). Cf. "*The Times* History of the War in South Africa," VI, pp. 52–6.

[2] Beak, "The Aftermath of War," p. 259.

[3] Correspondence in the South African Press shows that this unfounded sense of grievance still exists in some cases.

[4] For correspondence relating to the regulation and supply of labour in Southern Rhodesia, see Cd. 1200.

the restarting of the mines and causing depression and discontent on every side.[1]

But by March, 1903, the whole burgher population had been brought back to their homes. Notwithstanding the shortage of transport, every Boer returning from the prisoners' camps in the West Indies, etc., was allowed to bring as much baggage as he liked. It was remarked as an amusing incident in a situation otherwise far from comic, that every single family brought with it a parrot in a cage. The lands of those who had been unable to get mealies sown in time for the crop, upon which they must depend in the coming season, were ploughed and planted for them. The Boer farmers were moved to gratitude by the aid thus given. "We now see," it was said, "that the British really mean to help us."[2]

Unfortunately, return to prosperity was hindered by a prolonged drought which parched the country during the second half of 1902, until it was temporarily broken by heavy rains towards the end of December. Upon Milner, the drought, as he said, lay "like an ogre on the chest."[3] "What would have happened to us, in this year of all years," he wrote to a friend, 21/12/02, "and after all our superhuman efforts to get the people ploughs, animals, and seeds, if that appalling drought had continued another fortnight, I can't imagine. Now there are telegrams flying in from all quarters about heavy rains. The downpour has been general, and I breathe again. Not that anything can make it a good year. The rains came too late for that. But I think there will be a fair harvest, and that the bulk of the 'repatriated' Boers will be off our hands by March or April."

Politically the sky was darkened by attempts on the part of the repatriated Boers to ostracize and persecute the "hands-uppers,"

[1] Lord Milner to Lt.-Col. Chester Master, 27/9/02; Milner Papers, XXXI, iii, 216. Several despatches on the progress of repatriation and re-stocking the farms are printed in Cd. 1463 and 1553.

[2] The whole work of repatriation was described by Milner in the long despatch of March 14, 1903, Cd. 1551. It has been carefully summarized by Mr. W. B. Worsfold, in "The Reconstruction of the New Colonies under Lord Milner," I, Ch. III. See also *Report of the Repatriation Department of the Transvaal* (Capt. A. M. Hughes), Pretoria, 1906, and *Report on Repatriation in the Orange River Colony* (Lt.-Gov. Sir H. Goold-Adams), 1903 (Cd. 1551); "The Aftermath of War," by G. B. Beak, gives an authoritative account of the repatriation of the Boers and natives in the Orange River Colony.

[3] A reference to a cartoon by [Sir] F. C. Gould, July, 1900, depicting Kruger as an ogre oppressing the British Cabinet. "How can children take their rest, with an ogre on their chest."

as they were termed, those of their countrymen who had surrendered before Peace and sided with the British in order to bring the guerilla warfare to an end. Loyalists in the Cape Colony, too, were boycotted. And, unhappily, the influence of the Dutch Church was thrown on the side of keeping alive racial antagonism, on the supposition that real British supremacy would entail the loss of its influence (Milner Papers, XXX, i, 67).

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Major Goold-Adams.

10/8/02. . . . There is a matter which is giving me very grave anxiety. As you know, friction has always existed between the men who fought on our side, whether as National Scouts, Farmers' Guard or what not, and the late surrenderers. I hoped at one time it was going to subside, but latterly there has been a revival here, a part of the new and Afrikander Nationalist movement which is being engineered at Cape Town, and to which I am afraid that Botha, de Wet and De la Rey tumbled. A dead set is being made here against the National Scouts, and some of the Boer Leaders have even had the impudence to suggest that they should be excluded from any share of the three millions, and the mendacity to say that I agreed to this. The latter is the most thumping lie yet produced, even in South Africa. . . . I think that every reasonable advantage should be given, in the settlement of the country, to those who have shown themselves conciliatory or have fought for us. I am sure that you agree with this. In the Transvaal, in order to secure this and to protect the Scouts, who, being in a minority, are in danger of being bullied locally, I put either a member of their body or a friend of theirs on every Local Commission, with, perhaps, two exceptions. The exceptions were places where they virtually do not exist. I fancy the same has not been done in the Orange River Colony, nor am I sure that it was necessary. The trouble with you is, I think, less than with us. Now, however, that this deliberate attack is being made upon our friends, I think you will have to look specially after them. . . . I have had to warn some of our magistrates who, with the best of intentions, were playing the conciliatory game too hard, that whatever we might do to conciliate the bulk of the Burghers, the one thing we absolutely must not do was to abandon the men who had thrown in their lot with us at an early stage. . . . I have no wish to set them up over their fellows, but I feel that it is a matter of vital policy that the attempt to bully them with a view to make them repent, as the Rev. Mr. Bosman says they ought to do, is one that we must try to defeát by all means in our power. . . . There seems to be some bother about

arms. Lord K., I fear, undoubtedly promised the National Scouts that they should retain their arms. This is going too far, but inasmuch as, greatly to my dismay, the Military were quite liberal in their distribution of arms to the men who surrendered at the end, it is only fair that our friends should be allowed to retain arms in at least equal proportion. I have, as you know, been issuing ukases to prevent any further distribution of arms at present. Our Arms Act will be out this week, and it ought to make the possession of arms in the future a difficult matter. But, while I am, in principle, opposed to the multiplication of arms in the hands of Burghers, I feel that it would be even worse to allow those who are friendly to us to have a smaller proportion of arms than the more irreconcilable. Not that I think there is likely to be any fighting; it is a question of prestige. I do not want the irreconcilables to crow, and there is nothing which would make them crow more, than if they had done better in the matter of retaining rifles than the men who actually fought for us. . . .

As to the punishment of rebels, Natal was not at all inclined to accept Kitchener's suggestion that the example of the Cape Colony should be followed. The Natal Government looked askance at the proposed appointment of a Judicial Commission to inquire into sentences passed under Martial Law. It was pointed out that all sentences up to June 10 had been confirmed by Act of Parliament. It was felt that punishments hitherto inflicted had erred, if at all, on the side of leniency, and there was no reason to doubt that in the future, as in the past, due consideration would be paid to mitigating circumstances. Misplaced magnanimity towards the rebel Dutch would only stimulate racial antagonism, and not tend towards that assimilation in a new South African nationality which all wise men were hoping for. The approach of an election, however, led to angling for votes by politicians, who promised remission of sentences, and even compensation out of Imperial funds to rebels for damage done to their farms (Milner Papers, XVIII, iii, 112; XXXIII, ii, 164). Controversy on the point was quieted by the appointment of a Judicial Commission by the Imperial Government.

The New Colonies.

In the two new Colonies, abolition of Martial Law was accompanied by restrictions on immigration imposed by a Peace Preservation Act, adumbrated in Milner's letter to Chamberlain (Ch. VII). It was passed in November.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson.

15/11/02. . . . I am sending you a copy of the Peace Preservation Act, which will be published here in a few days. . . . It puts an end to martial law, but substitutes, for the time being, certain special provisions, of which by far the most important are the clauses maintaining the Permit system. . . . An identical ordinance will be published in the O.R.C. at the same time. . . . The object of the Permit clauses is to provide for two things very difficult to combine, namely, (i) to protect the new Colonies against the influx of persons socially, and, in some cases, politically, undesirable, before we have time to settle down and complete a fabric of social order which will be able to endure that influx, and (ii) to avoid causing unnecessary inconvenience to harmless immigrants or travellers, especially Britishers from the neighbouring Colonies . . . etc. Once obtained, the permits will hold good for a lifetime. . . .

Milner added that he hoped " for co-operation from the ordinary good citizens of Cape Colony and Natal, who will be caused as little inconvenience as possible, since it is in the interests of South Africa generally that the new Colonies, and especially Johannesburg, should be prevented from becoming the resort of political intriguers and undesirable immigrants." He invited the Governor to explain to men of sense and influence the object of the ordinances, and the spirit in which it was intended to administer them.

In reply to a communication from the South African Zionist Federation, requesting His Excellency to deny a rumour that he was in favour of continuing " the bigoted mediæval traditions " of the late Transvaal Government in its treatment of Jews, and had expressed a desire to avoid admitting Transvaal residents and refugees of Russo-Jewish origin to the rights of citizenship, Milner replied :

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. S. Goldreich.[1]

11/7/02. . . . I have to thank you for giving me the opportunity of removing what appears to be a serious misunderstanding. Whatever the conditions of naturalization which may be laid down by law in this Colony, it is quite certain that they will not contain any discrimination against Jews, whether of Russian or other origin. It is equally certain that in any Franchise Law which may be passed, no distinction, based upon race or creed, will be made between one white man and another. All British

[1] President of the South African Zionist Federation.

subjects will be treated alike, and whatever may be the qualifications for the Franchise, they will have no reference to a man's religion or previous nationality. The decision on these fundamental questions will not rest in my hands or those of any other individual. It cannot be decided except with the sanction of H.M. Government. If I speak confidently on the matter, it is because I know that the principles which I have indicated are part of a long settled policy, universal throughout the Empire, from which no British Government would think of departing. As far as I am personally concerned any such departure in this Colony would be entirely repugnant to my convictions and my feelings. Equally repugnant to me is anything like an ungenerous attitude towards Jews of foreign origin, who are either already resident in the Transvaal or may be intending to enter it. As regards the latter, I should regard with some apprehension any sudden influx of a large alien population, whencesoever coming or howsoever composed. But my feeling on this point is based on economic and social conditions, which have nothing to do with the religion or the nationality of the incomers. I have no prejudice against Jews as Jews, and I cannot think what has given rise to such an idea. Some of the best people I have ever known, some of my closest personal friends are Jews, and Jews intensely devoted to their race and religion. I have known the Jews as excellent colonists at the Cape—industrious, law-abiding and thoroughly loyal. Why should I expect the Jews of the Transvaal to be different? Please disabuse the minds of your friends of the idea that there is any " mediævalism " about me in this matter. . . .

Meanwhile the administration of the two new Colonies under Crown Colony Governments had been formally inaugurated. Kitchener had requested that the country districts should not be taken over by civil officers until the surrender of the Boer commandos was completed. The surrenders, however, were so swiftly made, that Kitchener was able to quit South Africa within three weeks of the signing of Peace. At a farewell banquet, Milner paid fitting tribute to the General's great achievement—" a great task thoroughly completed,—a perfect piece of workmanship,"—and to the courage, indomitable perseverance, and singular humanity of his army.

Extract from Diary.

June 17/02. . . . Kitchener had a most enthusiastic reception and spoke well. On our return home he went to bed at once. I, though tired, began, rather foolishly, to read some of the 2nd

Volume of Amery's "History of the War," and, becoming much interested, sat up to a late hour over it.

After Kitchener's departure, Milner drove in state to the Government buildings at Pretoria. There, in the old Raadzaal, the Letters Patent were read, and Milner took the oath as Governor of the Transvaal (June 21).

In the afternoon, the first meetings of the Executive and Legislative Councils were held.[1] After some lengthy, but "not very satisfactory" interviews with Generals Botha and De la Rey and Mr. Schalk Burger, "on questions connected with the surrender," on this and the following day, the High Commissioner left for Bloemfontein. There the new Government was installed with similar ceremonies at noon on June 23. Milner then returned to Johannesburg to resume his administrative duties . . . "in very low spirits" at the news of the King's illness (*Diary*).

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to General De la Rey.

17/2/03. . . . You may have seen in the papers that an unfavourable interpretation has been put upon your refusal to accept a seat in the Legislative Council. I only wish to say that, while I regretted your decision, I did not and do not think, that it was due to any wish to embarrass the Government. On the contrary, I accept to the full your assurances that you are working in the interests of peace and reconciliation. As I may not have an opportunity of seeing you for a little while, I write this, lest any wrong impression as to my feelings should spring up in your mind. I will only ask that you will treat me with the same confidence, and not hesitate to let me know if you have anything which you wish brought to my notice, or any suggestion to make to the Government, in the interests of the people, or for the promotion of a better understanding between different sections. You can write to me in Dutch if it saves you trouble, as, though I speak

[1] The Legislative Councils consisted at the outset of a few leading officials. But Milner as early as July 4 obtained leave to enlarge them by the addition of non-official members, English and Dutch. Botha, De la Rey, and Smuts refused to serve on the Transvaal Council, stating that in their opinion the time had not yet arrived for even a nominated Council, far less for popular representative institutions (Cd. 2104, p. 9 ; Milner Papers, XLVI, i, 120). Obviously, their refusal to have anything to do with the Nominated Council left them free to criticize and oppose the British Administration until complete self-government should be granted. Milner thereupon nominated more moderate men, who were ready to help with representations of Boer views.

and write that language with difficulty, I read it with perfect ease. . . .

At Bloemfontein Milner had administered the oath to Major Goold-Adams as Lieutenant-Governor of the Orange River Colony.

He never had reason to change his estimate of Goold-Adams' qualities. At the end of his career in South Africa he wrote :

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

13/3/05. . . . No one has a higher opinion of Goold-Adams, or a greater affection for him, than I have. His tact, his popularity, his good sense, his real devotion to his Colony, and sympathy with all its interests and pursuits, make him an almost ideal Governor and a great Imperial asset. . . .

In the Transvaal, the office of Lieutenant-Governor was filled by Sir Arthur Lawley, K.C.M.G. (Lord Wenlock), who, at Milner's request, returned to South Africa (August 31), from his Governorship of Western Australia.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

18/10/02. . . . We are still living in the most awful Augean stable here. But, on the other hand, the amount of work got through since June is enormous. Lawley is throwing himself into it with great energy. . . . I think he is rather astonished to find what he is in for. Of course, in theory, everyone knows that this is a big job. But it is one thing to think that at a distance, quite another to come here, and walk round, and see how absolutely vast and bewildering it is. There isn't a man in the place, who is any good at all, that hasn't six times too much to do. . . .

Mr. W. E. Davidson now became Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal. He had served as Secretary to the Administration since Sir George Fiddes had returned to the Colonial Office in London, where it was realized that his knowledge of South African affairs would prove invaluable. (Sir) Harry Wilson was continued as Colonial Secretary of the Orange River Colony, for Milner had come to the conclusion that he was doing such good work at Bloemfontein that it would be wasteful to transfer him to new surroundings in the Transvaal (Milner Papers, XXXII, ii).

Meanwhile Milner had also gathered round him that group of able young men, drawn from the Civil Service and elsewhere in England, who came to be popularly known as his "Kindergarten." Their subsequent careers are sufficient testimony both to the wisdom of his choice and to the value of the practical

experience and encouragement with which he provided them during this critical period of reconstruction. Their *doyen* was the Hon. Patrick Duncan, C.M.G., who had once been Milner's Private Secretary at the Board of Inland Revenue and who now became the first Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal, the beginning of a long period of public service in South Africa which has made him one of the leaders in the National Government. Mr. Lionel Curtis and Mr. W. L. Hichens, who had both come out in the ranks of the C.I.V., were occupied first as Town Clerk and Treasurer respectively of the new Johannesburg municipality. The former went on to the work of establishing local government throughout the Colony and played a leading part in the movement for South African Union ; the latter, after serving as Colonial Treasurer, returned to England as Chairman of Messrs. Cammell Laird. Two others—the Hon. R. H. Brand and Mr. Philip Kerr—specialized in the work of the Inter-Colonial Council, which controlled the railways and other services common to the two new Colonies and was deliberately created by Milner as a stepping-stone to the larger Union. Since then Mr. Brand, as a partner in Messrs. Lazard & Co., has long been a leading figure in the City, while Mr. Kerr (now Marquess of Lothian) has been Secretary to the Rhodes Trustees, Under-Secretary for India, and the Chairman of an important Indian Commission. Mr. Richard Feetham, who has for some years been a Judge of the High Court of South Africa, with interludes as Chairman of the Irish Boundaries and Shanghai Commissions, and Mr. John Dove, the present Editor of the *Round Table*, followed Mr. Curtis in turn as Town Clerk of Johannesburg. Mr. John Buchan—novelist, M.P., and lately His Majesty's High Commissioner in Scotland—devoted himself mainly to the work of repatriation and rural reconstruction. Mr. Basil Williams, historian and Professor, and another recruit from the ranks of the C.I.V., served in more than one department of the new administration. Mr. Geoffrey Dawson, the present Editor of *The Times*, took Mr. Walrond's place for the greater part of the next four years as principal Private Secretary. These were some of the men who came to work at this time in Johannesburg under Milner's direct inspiration ; and here they were reinforced by two earlier arrivals of whom mention has already been made—Mr. F. Perry, who had become Imperial Secretary in the Cape Town days, and subsequently left the Government service to take the Chairmanship of the Rand Native Labour Association ; and Lord Basil Blackwood, who was

presently detached for service at Bloemfontein, came home to join the Development Commission, and was eventually killed in the Great War as an officer in the Grenadier Guards.

The impression made by Milner upon his *entourage* may fitly be expressed in the language of one who met him in 1916, when on his mission to Russia. " His nobleness of mind, his entirely natural charm of manner, his lofty idealism, the complete absence of ambitious scheming or of anything approaching self-conceit in his character, and his broad and vigorous patriotism, made him the ideal inspirer of youth. With young men, too, he was at his best. He liked to surround himself with them. He believed they should be given their chance." [1]

The framework of the civil administration, which had been prepared during the years of warfare with so much care and foresight, proved equal to the tremendous strain it was now called upon to bear. With the assistance of local boards and local Commissions, the vast and pressing problems of repatriation and settlement were attacked with admirable vigour and efficiency.[2] Resident Magistrates, housed in tents or shanties made of corrugated iron, began to administer the country up to the Limpopo River. For the purposes of native administration, the Transvaal was divided into five districts. Under Sir Godfrey Lagden, native Commissioners carried to a successful conclusion the delicate task of disarming an excited native population, and imposing a new system of taxation.[3]

Order was maintained throughout the two Colonies by the South African Constabulary, with a network of posts and police controls. When General Baden-Powell handed over the command of that fine force to Colonel Nicholson, Milner expressed in a private letter and a General Order his high appreciation of his work.

Extract from Letter. Major-General [*General Lord*] *Baden-Powell to Lord Milner.*

18/2/03. . . . I cannot tell you how much I prize and value these expressions of your approval; and they form a reward

[1] R. H. Bruce Lockhart, " Memoirs of a British Agent " (1932).

[2] A Department of Lands, under Dr. A. Jameson, who had been Minister of Lands in Western Australia, superseded the temporary Land Board (Messrs. Loveday, Van der Byl and Crawford), appointed by Milner (Milner Papers, XXXIV, i, 68). The actual number of new settlers proved smaller than Milner had hoped would be the case. But by 1906 nearly 1,200,000 acres of State-owned land had been allotted to 660 families, Dutch as well as English, and in the Transvaal nearly a million acres to 596.

[3] Cd. 1551.

indeed for such troubles as I may have experienced during the past three years. . . . In the early days of the South African Constabulary we had difficulties, when all the promises of assistance from the Army fell to the ground, and we were practically left to work out our own salvation as best we could. . . . And when at times the difficulties made one think it useless to try to go on, it was your steadfastness of purpose at the helm—under stress of far greater difficulties—that made one ashamed of one's weakness and inspired one to further effort—and so we struggled through somehow. . . . I shall always remember with gratitude the courtesy, patience, and helpful encouragement which you have invariably accorded to us, and which were really the keystone of our progress. . . .

The High Commissioner, being thus relieved of much administrative work, had more time for directing measures of larger scope and considering the affairs of the other territories for which he was responsible—Rhodesia, Basutoland, the Bechuanaland Protectorate, and Swaziland. Leaving the details of repatriation to the Colonial Governments, he aimed, as he explained in the Repatriation despatch of March 14,[1] at exercising supervision from Government House, and direct supervision by personal inspection on the spot. For the latter purpose he undertook a series of "treks," in the course of which he covered 2,000 miles in the two Colonies. The first of the longer treks was made in September. Both in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony he was appalled by the devastation that had been wrought, and the immensity of the task of restocking the country.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

21/9/02. . . . I have been . . . a long trek round the Western Transvaal. We rode 250 miles, got drenched to the skin in an almost unprecedented thunderstorm, but otherwise met with few adventures. The country is quiet . . . only it is a complete wreck. Zeerust and the Marico generally are, in this respect . . . a little better than the rest. The destruction has been less complete, and this rich and beautiful district will fast recover. But everywhere else it is a melancholy spectacle. The farm-houses are all gone. But that is the least of the matter. They were wretched things. What is far more serious is the total absence of stock. It is all we can do with our greatest efforts to get the people just enough oxen to plough sufficient land to keep them alive ; if the mealie crop fails, we shall have to feed nearly the whole population

[1] Cd. 1551.

for another year. It was about two years ago that we were fuming about the policy of evacuation. This is the result of it. . . . By the by, do you remember the nice little English clergyman at Zeerust? Well, there he is still, living his quiet useful life, and very glad to be remembered. He was doing schoolmaster, and very well he did it, and is altogether a most worthy, loyal, rather pathetic figure.

These treks, though undertaken for a different purpose, were very similar in character to those which were made by the High Commissioner before the war, described at length in the preceding volume. For this reason it seems unnecessary to reproduce the detailed accounts of them recorded in his *Diary*. They were made chiefly on horseback, with waggons carrying tents, etc., and a Cape cart in attendance. Their importance lay in the opportunities they gave Milner of meeting the returning ex-burghers on their farms, and gauging their spirit and their difficulties. As the result, he was able to make suggestions to the Lieutenant-Governor at Pretoria for remedying their grievances and improving the work of repatriation. There is an interesting passage in Sir Percy Fitzpatrick's "South African Memories" (Ch. VII), recording a conversation with Milner at this period, which revealed his appreciation of the Boers he thus met in friendly intercourse, and his understanding of their mentality, born of their chequered history and determined isolation.

"I confess," so runs Sir Percy's version of the conversation, "that the genuine old Boer attracts me very much, and not only as a study or a problem. These old fellows, quite uneducated in our sense, who have probably never read a book except their Bibles, and very frequently cannot write an ordinary letter, are yet, as one has known it in the rural communities of other countries, the landed aristocracy, and are gentlemen in the best sense; dignified, courteous and hospitable, and amazingly self-controlled. They 'think behind their eyes,' and give nothing away. One feels that deep down there is a stratum which one cannot penetrate, beneath which are hidden and sealed convictions; their abiding purposes and aspirations; their amazing oneness as a race to which all others are alien."

There were some who thought that the Boer people would gladly accept Milner as their leader, if he could make himself better known to them.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Eugene Marais.

22/5/03. . . . I am grateful for your kind expressions, and I am glad you think, which is what I also think, that, if I were to see more of the men, who form the kernel of the Afrikander people, in their own natural surroundings, and apart from politics and politicians, we should get on well together. Considering the extraordinary disadvantages under which I have always laboured in approaching them—the natural consequence of circumstances, which have brought me into such sharp collision with the national aspirations of their race—I am under the impression that we have generally got on well together *personally*. . . . I do dislike some of their characteristic qualities as, for the matter of that, I dislike some of the characteristic qualities of my own people, and should dislike some of my own bad sides, if I could see myself properly, which nobody can. The fault, which I have come most in contact with, is the tendency not only to overreach in a bargain, but to assume that the man, with whom you are bargaining, is also trying to overreach, that it is impossible that he should be straightforward, that he must have something up his sleeve, must be trying to " do you down." . . . But I am not so unreasonable as to suppose that because this attitude is a common one, among Afrikanders, especially of the political class, it is therefore universal to the race. And even if it is common, I fully agree with you that it is just the class of fault, which education and refinement, and greater experience of the world and of the different types of humanity one may come in contact with, tends to remove. And if I am specially annoyed by one very common failing in your countrymen, I am, on the other hand, specially attracted by their most characteristic virtues. Whatever I may have said or felt against them, I never, even in the heat of the struggle, failed to appreciate and to vindicate, against those on our side who tried to strengthen our case by calumny, their patriotism, their courage, their resourcefulness, their endurance, their dignity and self-restraint in victory and their stoicism in defeat. And now that the fight is over, I am deeply impressed by the manly way, in which so many of them, the kernel, as I think, of the race, are facing the future, and *without subservience*, are trying to make the best of the new situation. It cannot be otherwise than my desire (it would be my *pleasure* as well as my *duty*) to do everything man can do, consistently with the maintenance of the new political order, to assist their recovery and their progress, not only in material respects, but in the best sense of that much abused word. There is an immense field for co-operation. I do not expect it to come easily, or all at once. It may be that, as far as I am personally

concerned, the occurrences of the past will always be an obstacle, not on *my* side—of that I can assure you—but on *theirs*. That would be very regrettable, but it would be so natural, that I could not, in fairness, condemn them for it. It would not alter my sincere desire to work for their good. Meanwhile, whatever you or others, who are able to take an impartial, and even a kindly, view of me, can do, to remove suspicion and to pave the way to a better understanding, will be a real service, not only to me—that is a minor consideration—but to the country in which we live together. . . .

One passage from the record of the trek through the South-Western districts of the Transvaal may be given as typical, and one short passage from a letter to Sir Arthur Lawley, full of suggestions as to details.

Extract from Diary.

Sept. 19/02. Left Lichtenburg at 8 in the morning. . . . We rode about 30 miles through a flat country but more fertile-looking than that of Wednesday, and outspanned for lunch at a place called Kaffirkraal. The weather had been hotter than before, and our animals felt it rather. At Kaffirkraal I had a long talk, in broken Dutch, to a man . . . just back from St. Helena, who had a very big farm at that place. As usual there was a large family of all degrees of relationship. After a long rest we rode on to Hartebeestfontein, upwards of 16 miles, stopping on the way at another farm, belonging to two brothers, to one of whom I spoke. Here the people were beginning to resettle amid the ruins. All this country has been fearfully harried. We reached Hartebeestfontein after dark. The place is a total wreck. . . . We must have ridden nearly 50 miles.

Sept. 20. Got up very early. Before leaving Hartebeestfontein had a long talk to two brothers . . . and heard all their grievances. Rode off about 8 for Klerksdorp, stopping on road to talk to a Lichtenburg Boer . . . who was returning with a very fine waggon and train—the best I have seen—from selling oranges at Klerksdorp. He was very sulky at first, but I presently got him into a better temper. Outside Klerksdorp we were met by . . . a number of the townspeople. I went to the hotel for a wash, then there was a presentation of an address of welcome in the town square, then we all adjourned to the Magistrate's Office, where there were a number of other addresses to which I briefly replied. Luncheon at the hotel, the principal people being with us, then I went to the Burgher Camp and Repatriation Depot. Had a long

talk with . . . members of the Potchefstroom District Commission. Back to my train, very tired, for dinner and bed. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir Arthur Lawley.

13/9/02. . . . At Steinkoppies, a Police Post, there was a big notice Board in the main road, with Police notices ; good notion this, and the notices contained many things useful to the people, such as the Arms Ordinance, the Cattle Diseases Prevention Ordinance. But they were in English only. I think this just a case where we ought to use both English and Dutch. As you know, I am as keen as possible about making the use of English universal, and its position as the official language quite clear. But I want also to use Dutch where it is clearly a great convenience to people, and in purely agricultural districts there are still many who can read nothing else. I want to help them to understand what we are doing and what we wish them to do ; also to break down, as far as possible, the aloofness of the people from the Government, and the feeling that it is distant, strange, unsympathetic. . . . I met the Repatriation Commission at Rustenburg. . . . Some Compensation questions cropped up . . . I mentioned, not as binding on them, but as a good plan, what the Rand Commission are doing about British claims, viz. (i) rejecting all trumpery claims, even if genuine—as for a kit-bag or an umbrella, and (2) rejecting claims, even for substantial amounts, from rich people, where the loss, though in itself considerable, is a flea-bite *to them.* The object of compensation is not to recoup everybody—an impossibility—but to help those whose losses have been heavy, *in proportion to their resources*, to make a fresh start. . . .

In the following months the High Commissioner visited the remaining districts of the Transvaal in a series of treks lasting from October 6 to 13, and October 28 to November 4. Then, in the company of Sir H. Goold-Adams and Colonel Pilkington, he spent three weeks on trek through the whole of the Orange River Colony (Nov. 24–Dec. 16).

There was much that was patriarchal in the Boer society of those days, and there was a patriarchal touch in the picture of the High Commissioner travelling through the land, stopping at farms and villages, talking with the Dutch farmers in their own dialect, listening sympathetically to their difficulties, and discussing with them their crops and stocks. The discovery that their Governor was a man of winning tact and kindly nature, who had taken the trouble to study their language, and who displayed an eager and intelligent interest in their welfare, could not fail to produce a good

effect upon some at least of those who had been accustomed to regard him as an implacable enemy of their race. Moroseness changed to cordiality, as they realized that he was ready to listen with helpful sympathy to their complaints as to lack of native labour and draught oxen, and the question of compensation.

Finance.

Before starting on his September trek, Milner had spent ten days of "really furious drive," as the *Diary* puts it (Sept. 1–10). In addition to many interviews and much routine work, he was hard pressed to finish a long despatch on the financial position of the New Colonies. In the end, he had to delay the mail until the despatch was finished.

Extract from Diary.

Sept. 8/02. A day of fearful rush. I worked before breakfast. . . . I pushed on as hard as ever I could to get my long financial despatch finished for the mail. The mail train was delayed for half an hour, and by a great effort I managed just to catch it with the despatch, finished in a hurry and rather untidy and ragged. . . . After dinner work again till I was too tired to go on. To bed late.

The masterly despatch thus composed placed before the Cabinet the information needed for coming to a decision upon the Development Loan and War Contribution.[1] The content of it had been foreshadowed in his letter to Chamberlain (21/12/01, Ch. VIII, p. 301). After stating that the contribution to be made by the new Colonies to the War debt of Great Britain called for immediate determination, since it was the "great overshadowing and disturbing factor in all our financial forecasts," and that uncertainty on that point was the cause, "in part at least, of the prevailing financial depression and almost the whole of the political unrest," he laboured, by carefully marshalled facts and arguments, to establish two principles, forming "two aspects of a single economic policy and the only right one." The two principles were "expenditure to develop the country, and thereby develop the sources of revenue; and reliance for revenue, not upon high rates of taxation, but an increase of the things taxed." He surveyed the resources of the Transvaal, and the revenue which could be obtained from the mines and other taxation; recapitulated its needs for the "first equipment" of railways, roads, bridges, buildings, water and

[1] Cd. 1552; Milner Papers, XXXII, i, 59.

lighting, essential for its development as a civilized and prosperous state; and argued that everything which checked development tending towards expansion of industry and increase of population, would check the ability of the new Colonies to contribute to the relief of the British taxpayer.

He then repeated and revised his previous estimates of the liabilities, revenue and needs of the Transvaal, and advocated "a Consolidated Transvaal Loan of £30,000,000 at not less than 4 per cent to cover an ample sinking fund, thus wiping out all existing liabilities and providing for the capital expenditure of the next few years." As to the War Debt, "I do not myself doubt that, admitting the principle that the Transvaal should contribute in proportion to its means, by which I understand after providing for the cost of its administration and for the interest on capital expenditure for its own development, that Colony may still assist substantially in the extinction of the debt." The Orange River Colony would require a loan of £8,000,000, and could then pay its way, but would not be in a position to contribute to the War Debt.

The preparation of this despatch and of estimates for the Transvaal budget (June, Milner Papers, XXXII, i, 59), had involved investigation into the complicated finances of the late Government. Aided by the Colonial Treasurer, Mr. Duncan, and Mr. Wybergh, the High Commissioner applied to these tasks a mind which had a natural affinity for figures, and was trained by experience at the Board of Inland Revenue and in the financial administration of Egypt. It was no mere historical inquisition. Taxation must depend upon accurate estimates of resources, and of the productive power of mines relieved from the iniquitous impositions of the past. The whole future development of South Africa hung upon the financial and industrial strength of the Transvaal. Milner's investigations included inquiries into the amount of gold taken out of the mines by the late Government, and into the "funds" which had been shipped to England.[1]

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir Arthur Lawley.

24/10/02. . . . Thanks for your letter about the Orphan Funds of the late Transvaal Government. I agree with you, that, under the circumstances, there is nothing to be made of that point. But this does not alter my desire to raise the question of the disposal of Transvaal Funds generally by the late holders of power.

[1] See Ch. II, p. 77.

What is certain is, that they have taken away large sums of money. Whether they were private moneys or public moneys does not seem to me to matter very much. The point is that some of the persons at present engaged [1] in appealing to the world for assistance for the ruined Burghers, and at the same time asking us to let them return to this country, are in possession of large sums of money, of which they have never rendered any account. These sums are either being applied for their own private purposes, or stowed away for the purpose of carrying on a political campaign against us in Europe,[2] and perhaps some day paying for more arms and ammunition to be smuggled in here. . . . I should be delighted to devote the whole of it, in so far as it is available for any public purpose, to the relief of poor Burghers. . . . The two great objects, to my mind, are, first, to prevent the money, if possible, from being used for mischief, and secondly, to expose the scandal, which is, as far as I can recollect, without a parallel, but which, at present, seems to excite no interest in anybody. At present, the old gang are all clamouring to return, and posing as injured innocents, because I won't let them. It would be difficult, even for a pro-Boer Radical, to make much of an outcry over the continued exclusion from his hearth and home of the gentleman who is sitting on £100,000 of stolen money, and at the same time wailing to the philanthropic of Europe and America to subscribe for the relief of his poor countrymen. . . .

The financial proceedings of the late Government, however, were, no doubt for good reasons, wrapped in impenetrable mystery (Milner Papers, XXXII, i, 15).

Railways.

The despatch of September 8 on Finance and the War Debt had been followed two days later by one describing the new railways which it was proposed to construct,[3] the capital outlay involved, and the revenue which they might be expected to yield (Cd. 1552). Ever since the days of Carnarvon, intercolonial jealousy had stood in the way of the pooling of interests with regard to railways,

[1] On the "Appeal of the Boer Generals to the Civilized World," and their interviews with Mr. Chamberlain (Sept.–Nov. 1902), see Cd. 1284, 1329.

[2] In the following year the holders of the Transvaal funds in Holland were making arrangements for financing a Dutch newspaper in South Africa, to champion "Dutch interests in South Africa and the Afrikander cause under the guidance of the Bond" (Milner Papers, XVII, iv, 66).

[3] Shortly after Milner left South Africa the mileage of lines in the two new Colonies alone was double that before the war.

customs, and ports, which was the necessary condition of Confederation. As to the delicate and complicated question of a Customs Union, Milner recognized that time and careful handling were required. But in October he approached the Government of Natal as to the date and place at which a Conference might be summoned (Milner Papers, XVIII, iii, 66; XXVIII, iii, 68). He also raised with the Governor of Natal the no less important and complicated matter of railway policy.

Everybody who studied the subject impartially was impressed by the loss to the public, as well as the ceaseless causes of friction between the several Colonies, arising from the divided ownership of the State railways of South Africa. The desirability of pooling receipts was obvious. But agreement upon the basis upon which profits should be divided involved an enormous amount of investigation and a great deal of give-and-take. The difficulty was accentuated by preferential agreements with regard to the working of the Delagoa Bay line, which had been entered into by the South African Republic.

Natal grew nervous lest her local interests and the port of Durban should be adversely affected by the development of the port of Delagoa Bay. Whilst one strong section of the community was anxious to approach the problem from the South African point of view, another was taking a more parochial view. So far as the question had become a party one, Milner felt precluded from discussing it. But as regards the possible effects of immediate developments at Delagoa Bay, he gave his opinion, when asked. For upon it hinged the whole policy of enlarging Durban harbour and building a new railway, for which many millions would be required, in order to secure to Natal the large share in the Transvaal trade overseas which would fall to her, unless control of the port of Delagoa Bay passed into the hands of the Transvaal Province.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. H. Ramsay Collins.

5/11/02. [PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL] . . . I have been trekking about in out-of-the-way districts of the Transvaal, and at such times, when one is not actually riding, one is torn to pieces by interviewers and has no time for correspondence. I was glad to see what you said about the continued confidence felt in my policy in Natal. I think, though I say it as shouldn't, that the confidence is not undeserved, as the broad South African policy, which I try to follow, is one by which Natal has everything to gain and nothing to lose. As for parochialism, no doubt it exists in

Natal, but so, for the matter of that, it does in the Transvaal. I am "again it" wherever it crops up. You may have noticed a speech I made at Johannesburg on the 25th October. . . . There is a passage at the end bearing on Inter-Colonial Relations, which, though it sounds like a platitude, was spoken with good reason and serious intent. What I said there is my strong conviction. The Transvaal ought not to be run on selfish lines, but for the good of the whole. It is in the interests of the Transvaal itself to adopt this policy. As regards the particular question you put to me, I feel, as you suppose, that it is my duty to do what I can to improve Delagoa Bay, which is, and always must be, the natural *first* Port of the Transvaal. We have already succeeded in doing something in this direction, and shall continue, I hope, to do more and more each succeeding year. But I am quite convinced that it will take a long time to make Delagoa Bay of anything like the same service to us that it ought to be, and by that time the total trade will have greatly increased. And even if the *proportion* of that total trade falling to Durban is less in the distant future than it is likely to be in the next few years, it will still be *absolutely* greater. I have, therefore, no doubt in my own mind, and if I was a Natalian I should have no hesitation in advocating, that Durban should even at great expense make itself a first-class port, and that it need never fear that the expenditure involved in achieving this will prove too costly. What I say of the Port, I say also of the railway. While you are about it, make it as good as ever you can ; make it capable of carrying permanently a much greater traffic than it can carry to-day. You will certainly want it. This is the general principle. . . . I am always a little surprised at the nervousness felt by each of the South African Ports in succession that it is going to be left. Putting aside Cape Town, which no doubt is greatly handicapped for the trade of the interior by its extreme western position, it is, I think, evident to anyone who will think it out statistically, that one of the great difficulties of the future will be the inadequacy of all our ports put together to do the work. There are only four at present, and I do not see how we are ever to have more than five or six. That is too little even for present needs, and, though I admit that the present is a period of temporary inflation, which, when the interior is replenished with stock of all sorts, may be followed by a very temporary slump, the ultimate needs are quite beyond the capacity of the present ports in their present condition to adequately meet. No doubt they all may improve themselves by great expenditure, and in the long run all will, but the port or ports which may be first equipped to meet the next great permanent expansion of South African Trade (which in my opinion, though it is hard to foretell exact dates, is

certainly not five years off), will have no cause to regret that foresight. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir H. McCallum.

11/11/02. . . . I entirely agree with what you say, and recognize the impossibility of asking a self-governing Colony to give over the control of its own railways. Ultimately I hope the control of the railways will pass into the hands of a Federal Government, but that is a long way off. In the meantime we must have as much practical co-operation as possible by always consulting with one another before taking steps involving our common interests. . . . The lowering of rates is, in my opinion, inevitable, and, greatly as it would affect our revenue, I am, nevertheless, of opinion that it will be wise and, in the long run, paying to face the question soon. As regards the proportion of the through-rates, it is a difficult problem. I quite recognize that you have the longer and the harder haul for less money. But, on the other hand, it is to the existence of this place that the great value of your line is due, and you have a direct interest in reducing the cost of living here, which is one of the first conditions of an increase of population and of business. We must both look to making up in greater quantity of traffic the loss involved in the reduction of preposterous rates. . . .

Controversy as to the development of transport and the route to be followed by the proposed new line in Natal became a chief factor in an election campaign, and a bone of contention there between the Ministry and the " Progressive " party afterwards.

The Prime Minister, Sir A. Hime, endeavoured to form a Coalition Ministry, with the object of keeping discussion of that question in abeyance, until the mutual interests of Natal and the two new Colonies had been considered at a Conference. But he recognized that the spirit of the Opposition was uncompromising, and that he might be obliged to hand over the reins of government before the settlement of the Railway and Customs problems, upon which he had set his heart.

The Garrison

When General Lyttelton succeeded Kitchener in the South African Command, the strength of the future garrison had to be decided. Milner had long been advocating that, instead of an army of occupation consisting of small scattered garrisons or mobile columns, there should be established a great training camp—a South African Aldershot—for at least 30,000 men, chiefly mounted,

in the North of Cape Colony (*v.* Ch. IV, p. 161). There troops could learn, as nowhere else in the world, the system of tactics which English armies seemed most likely to require in the future. Both Mr. Amery, whose articles in *The Times* commanded Milner's admiration, and General Ian Hamilton worked hard in London in support of the plan for making South Africa the military base of a large expeditionary force on the Home establishment. Kitchener was reported to be in favour of it (Milner Papers, XXXI, i). In respect of climate, of space, and strategical position, the plan appeared to be an ideal one. But, as Milner wrote to Sir Henry McCallum (13/7/02), "it is too original on the one hand, and on the other hand too obviously appropriate to local conditions, to commend itself to the slaves of tradition at the War Office."

The scheme was strongly supported by Chamberlain. But there was much difference of opinion in the Cabinet, and the War Office experts were opposed to it. Objection was based mainly on the extra cost involved, and the difficulty of recruiting for such service. Indeed, the only idea of the War Office seemed to be to reduce the Army as fast as possible. Brodrick actually announced that the force would be reduced to 15,000 men. But, thanks to the insistence of Milner and Chamberlain, its permanent strength was fixed in the following July at 25,000 (Milner Papers, XXXIII, ii, 194).

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to General the Hon. N. G. Lyttelton, K.C.B.

18/11/02. . . . I have the honour to acknowledge your despatch with reference to the strength of the Army to be kept in South Africa. I venture to deprecate any reduction of the strength fixed by Lord Kitchener, after the conclusion of Peace, at so early a date as March next, especially in the new Colonies or the Cape Colony. Perhaps a Regiment of Infantry and one of Mounted Infantry might be spared from Natal. I entirely agree with you that there is no danger of an immediate rising. For present purposes the garrison of 40,000 men, or perhaps even half that number, might be sufficient. But I attach great importance, from the political point of view and with a view to the complete pacification of the country and the abandonment of all schemes of future disturbance, to the maintenance, for at least a year or two longer, of such a force in the country as would make the entertaining of such schemes evidently hopeless. It must not be forgotten that, in bringing back the Prisoners of War, we began with those of the most pacific disposition. We have yet to face the return of the Irreconcilables, and we shall not be able, permanently, to

avoid, though we may defer, the return of many others, not Prisoners of War, whom we know to be unchangeably hostile. The composition of the population six months hence, and even more a year hence, will be less favourable to a pacific attitude than it is to-day. It is, to my mind, of great importance that, while the more turbulent spirits are returning and *until they have finally settled down*, there should be no symptoms on our part of any premature relaxation of vigilance. I feel very strongly indeed on this subject. It should not be forgotten, in this connection, that, at the time when Lord Kitchener's Garrison was fixed, the strength of the South African Constabulary was 10,000 men. This was much more than was necessary for police purposes. Indeed, half the Constabulary, at that figure, might be regarded as an additional Military Force. It has now been decided to reduce the Constabulary as quickly as possible to 6,000 men, which is indeed quite sufficient for police purposes. But they can no longer be regarded as any substantial addition to the Military strength. . . . It is, from my point of view, of less importance to keep up the total contemplated number of Infantry than that of the Mounted men, and it is also, in my opinion, of less importance to be at full strength during the next few months than it will be during the year following. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

[? *May*] 1903. . . . I agree most heartily with your arguments, and can see no possible answer to them. I have seldom felt so strong a conviction on any subject as I do on the unwisdom of throwing away the immense advantages, political, and I think strategical also, of keeping South Africa as a military base. I am afraid, as far as I can judge from the telegrams which Lyttelton receives, that the War Office is not open to conviction on the question. They still seem to hanker after a " garrison " of 15,000 men, and if it is true that what they ultimately contemplate is to *station* here 10 regiments of Infantry and 4 of Cavalry, I can imagine nothing more fatuous. In any case, I hope you will not let them reduce the present establishment for some time. It can never be increased again without great political trouble at home, and, till we see our way clearer, it *really is not safe* to reduce the force from the figures agreed upon when you were here, or to disturb the proportion of mounted men. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

5/7/03. [SECRET] . . . Since I returned home I have wasted a good deal of time in communication with the War Office about the Army in South Africa. I secured the appointment of a Cabinet

Committee and we have had several meetings, and have at last come to an arrangement which, although not entirely satisfactory, is the best I could get without a break up. I found the War Office authorities pledged to reduce the garrison to 15,000 men and very averse to any increase. . . . The difficulty of carrying out our plans is no doubt chiefly one of expense. It is evident that the Army in South Africa must cost very much more, man for man, than the Army at home, and this extra expense is estimated for 25,000 men, as you will see, at £1,650,000. I do not agree with the figures, but I cannot resist the statement that a very considerable extra expenditure will be necessary. To meet this, my only proposal was a reduction in the number of regiments of the regular army; but to this both Lord Roberts and Brodrick offered an invincible resistance. The proposal now is to allow the forces in South Africa to be 25,000 men, or five thousand less than I had hoped; the reduction to be made gradually and without calling special attention to it. Then the extra cost is to be partially paid by India, in return for the Indian Government having first call on half the force in case of emergency. In addition to this Brodrick demands a contribution from the Colonies. I have pointed out the difficulties in the way, and have refused to pledge myself to obtain any such contribution. It would be reasonable and fair that the two Colonies, as well as Natal and the Cape, should contribute to what is an Imperial Army, and, if they would do so, the number now fixed might be regarded as permanent, and the army treated, not as a garrison, but as a part of the Imperial forces stationed in South Africa for the sake of strategical advantages and convenience of the Colonies. . . . If it should be absolutely impossible to make an arrangement of this kind, we shall still go on with 25,000 men at the joint expense of India and the mother-country for the present; but I have little doubt that in this case a large portion of them would be immediately removed if the Opposition came into power; whereas, if the Colonies were paying their share, I do not think any Government would venture to remove the troops which were stationed under such an agreement. . . .

The idea of establishing a Military Technical College in South Africa, after the fashion of Kingston (Canada), was also broached by Mr. C. S. Goldmann [1] to Chamberlain and Milner (27/11/02).

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. C. S. Goldmann.

9/1/03. . . . The suggestion which you make about the establishment of a Military Technical College in South Africa is an

[1] Author of "With General French and the Cavalry in South Africa."

important one, and I shall be very happy to discuss it with the Military authorities here, and also with Mr. Chamberlain, if time permits. . . .

Milner at the same period found time to discuss and arrange conditions for the formation of what soon became a fine and popular Volunteer Corps, for which the Imperial Government had made the generous gift of 3,000 horses.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Major-General Oliphant.

2/8/02. . . . An Ordinance has been passed giving the Governor power to enroll Volunteer Corps and make regulations for them. Those regulations ought to be issued without delay. But I do not like to take this important step without making sure that the regulations are, as far as possible, in conformity with the wishes of people here. . . .

Rhodesia.

There was a movement about this time among some settlers in Rhodesia for the abrogation of the Charter of the British South Africa Company, and union with the Transvaal, in the hope of sharing in developments there. Milner himself was inclined to favour the idea, as a reversion to Rhodes' policy of Federation from the North. But too many other pressing problems absorbed his attention. A highly interesting letter from Earl Grey at the end of the year gives a picture of Rhodesia at this period.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton Gell.

20/4/02. . . . I will confine myself to one subject to-day, future of Rhodesia. If one had not such an appalling amount of hay on one's fork, I should try to seize the opportunity of Rhodes' death (I agree with all you say about him ; Rhodes *in his old form* would have been invaluable during the next few years), to try and get Rhodesia at once into the boundaries of Imperially-governed South Africa. I think this could be done without interfering with such local liberties as at present exist, and I also think that the necessary financial adjustments would be easier to make now than later. But, unless the B.S.A. Co. were prepared to start the ball, I don't think this *vis inertiæ* Government is likely to take up the matter. . . . If I get a Lt.-Governor for the Transvaal to take the purely local business off my back, I could devote more time to Rhodesia, and help to untie some of those needless knots, into which the Colonial Office have got the thing. . . . You want the " Imperial Factor," but you want it on the spot, seeing local difficulties with its own eyes. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Earl Grey.

14/9/02. . . . My own belief is that if Federation is ever to come, it will only be by accretion. A Federation of the Central States under British auspices would very soon draw in Natal, and Natal once drawn in, the Cape could not stand out for ever, because, should it attempt to do so, the Eastern Province and Kimberley would break loose and join the British Confederacy. Unless the thing is done in this way, I foresee that one of two things will happen—either Federation will be indefinitely deferred, or else it will be Federation on the lines imagined by the Afrikander politicians at the Cape, resulting in a reproduction of the present Cape situation, but on a larger scale, over the whole of S. Africa.[1] This would be the worst thing that could happen. . . .

Extract from Letter. Earl Grey to Lord Milner.

The Sanatorium, Kimberley. 21/12/02. . . . Since I left you at Ermelo, I have covered huge distances . . . and learnt at first hand sufficient of the resources and possibilities of Rhodesia, to enable me to go home more convinced than ever of the great future which awaits it, if capital, brains and energy can be turned on to its development. First I was much impressed by the evident improvement that has taken place in the moral atmosphere of the country. . . . The jolly reckless spirit of adventure, which aimed at making a million in half an hour and then clearing home to Piccadilly, no longer holds the field, and with it has disappeared to a great extent the amateur mismanagers and slovenly business methods which attended it. In its place I have found a steady and plodding industry on sound business lines, a considerable number of excellent settlers, who have come to the country to stay, and a general recognition of the necessity . . . of treating the Kaffir with scrupulous fairness. . . . Of course the mines still occupy the first place in the minds of the people. . . . But the prosperity of the merchant, the transport rider and the industrious farmer are beginning to turn men's minds into other directions as well as mining, and this is the great change for the good, which I have found on my return to the country after 5 years' absence. I wonder whether you are aware that my old uncle, Lord Grey, the best Colonial Secretary before the present one, refused to send a geologist to Australia when pressed by Murchiston in 1850 to do so, on the ground that the discovery of gold was a very doubtful advantage, as it withdraws men from safer pursuits to engage in hazardous speculations—an extravagant attitude, but one for which the position of Rhodesia to-day supplies some justification—for I

[1] Events proved the accuracy of this prophecy.

am convinced, without implying any disparagement of the richness of our mines, that it is the gold which is going to be turned by the ploughshare from the surface of the earth that will contribute most to the permanent prosperity of Rhodesia. The mines have built the Railways, and have made agriculture possible. They have supplied the initial market, and we have now to make use of the railways they have given us to build up for our farmers the organization which will make possible a steadily increasing export trade. We have thousands of acres of rich, beautiful soil, and in Mashonaland not far from our port, unfortunately Portuguese, the facilities for extensive irrigation hold out to the poor and industrious settler a better chance of a moderate competence than can be found in gold-bearing quartz, however rich. Tobacco grows like a weed all over the country—cotton ditto—and on irrigable land in addition to oranges, fruit, etc., we can grow winter wheat and potatoes, and on dry land we can produce unlimited summer crops of mealies by labour-saving machinery at comparatively low cost. . . . Up to now the Administration, owing to the heavy deficits we have had to meet, has been unable to afford even such a *necessity* as an Experimental Farm. But when you remove from our neck that heavy millstone of £100,000 unnecessary Police expenditure which weighs us down, we shall be able to go ahead with the work of promoting our agriculture and supplying export facilities. Already the Administration is helping the farmer to secure expert assistance for tobacco and cotton, and the Rhodes Trustees are showing what can be done with irrigable ground, and are also providing an arboretum, which, Hutchins assisting, will teach us which are the best trees for our climate and soil. . . . Goold-Adams has offered the brothers Grenfell a Colliery concession and a farm, subject to the condition that no black labour is employed. This offer interests me much. It provides the opportunity for which I have been some time waiting of assisting in the building up of a model garden city on the lines of Cadbury's place at Bournville. I propose to visit the colliery and farm near Kroonstadt with Grenfell, and look forward with hope to the possibility of helping them to establish on sound lines a social experiment, which under good management *ought* to be successful, and thus enable them once more to serve both God and Mammon. . . .

Extract from Letter. Chief Lewanika [1] *to Lord Milner.*

[*Feb.* 1903.] My friend, I write to tell you that I have safely

[1] Paramount Chief of the Barotse, whose dignity and refined manners won general admiration during the visit to England for the Coronation of King Edward VII, to which he here refers. For an appreciation of him, see Colonel Colin Harding's book "In Remotest Barotseland."

returned to my home, and also to say that I give you many many thanks for opening the road for me to visit England. You came through the Boer War to meet me at De-Aar, and through you the people were very kind to me in England. I hope you won't forget this country but look well after it as you do after other countries in S. Africa. The Portuguese are still claiming the country on the West part and I hear this year that (Banka Lefatse ka matta -a bona) they are taking the country with their power. I am still looking for the promised Commission to fix my line as I do not wish to be under two Powers. Again, I thank you, I am much pleased with my visit. Colonel Harding has gone well with me always. I and my indunas are thankful to him and to you for sending him to look after me. I tell you this that you may know. Your friend LEWANIKA.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Lewanika, Chief of Barotseland.

18/2/03. . . . I can assure you that I shall not forget your country. I think much about your country and I am very sorry that the question of your boundary on the West is not yet settled. H.M. Government knows the importance of this question and is doing its best to get the matter arranged. For my own part I shall be glad indeed to know that your borders are finally delimited and that you are solely under the protection of King Edward the Seventh, of whose good will you are assured. . . .

Innumerable other matters demanded constant care and patience, and a large wisdom to adjust. The working and rates of the Shipping Combine, for instance, called for investigation.

The worries and difficulties of this struggle to emerge from chaos were, of course, immense. They were redoubled when an outbreak of plague added to the devastating delay in return to prosperity caused by the prolonged drought. Even Milner's prodigious capacity for work was severely taxed ; the calm of even his sane and balanced outlook was sometimes ruffled. Reaction caused fits of depression, to which he gave occasional expression. "Weariness and disgust beginning to tell," he notes in his *Diary* in September.

" The whole job," he wrote to a friend in October, " really is, beyond belief, enormous. It is the work of twenty years crammed into one. But I know I am building on sand. Look at the house of cards which I so laboriously constructed at the Cape. Things there are worse than ever." . . .

He foresaw very clearly that the time would come when the seesaw of politics at home, or a weakening Government, would

deprive him of the support necessary for carrying his policy to a successful issue. "My policy," he wrote to Sir Clinton Dawkins in November, "is one which, though with grave exception and constant grumbling endorsed for the time being by the Government, will not for any length of time commend itself to British opinion. I am convinced I am right, and will not yield. . . . But for me to be *thrown over*, would be an almost irreparable misfortune to the British cause in Africa. It is not desirable, on public grounds, to court such a disaster. The alternative is to clear out, on some plausible pretext of a non-political character, before the bent bow breaks. I shall have given the new regime a good shove-off, anyway. . . .

Happily, a sense of humour helped Milner to cast off the shadow of such forebodings. Everybody appealed to him; everybody grumbled. The local Press reproved him for speaking so little, and moving so slowly. The Radical Press at home solemnly scolded him for doing so much, holding up its hands in holy horror at his "terrific industry." Some of the Johannesburgers, disappointed that the millennium did not arrive within a month of the declaration of Peace, and unable to appreciate the energy and ability with which they were being served, began to cry out against Crown Colony Government and "an imported bureaucracy." "Everybody," Milner remarked about this time, "who holds a bad hand at bridge, damns Milner."

Extract from Letter. Mr. J. M. Rendel to Lord Milner.

14/2/03. . . . The campaign against you in the *Daily News* goes merrily on. It is a curious picture they paint. At one time you are the pliant tool of capitalists who use you without your knowing it; at another, a nervous-minded, bitter, unsympathetic bureaucrat, for whom there is no place in a free community. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Lady Lyttelton.

25/12/02. . . . Thank you so much for . . . Lyall.[1] . . . I have read him through since morning. When one is very low, poetry or criticism, if the style is good, are more acceptable . . . than stories, which seem to require higher spirits. . . . Lyall is more sympathetic about Tennyson than I had expected. . . . He is especially appreciative of his music—for which no praise can be too high. . . . I suppose Tennyson and Virgil are the two greatest musicians among poets (they are in my little lot). But Tennyson played many instruments, almost all well, while Virgil had only that one old organ, tho' *on it* nobody ever touched him. . . .

[1] Sir Alfred Lyall.

CHAPTER XI

Natal Boundaries and the Suspension Movement at the Cape

Extension of Natal Territory

As High Commissioner, it was part of Milner's duties to hold the balance between the conflicting interests and ambitions of the several Colonies. At the Cape there was nervousness lest that Colony might suffer from the development of the new Colonies, and some apprehension was felt lest preference might be given to the Natal and Netherlands railways for the transmission of the Rand gold (Milner Papers, XXXIV, ii, 236).

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to (Sir) Lewis Michell.

29/1/02. [PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL] . . . What you tell me about the discontent in men's minds at the thought of the Cape having to " take a back seat " is natural,—though not reasonable. To some extent the Cape will be overshadowed by the enormous development of the Transvaal, though it must be more agreeable to be overshadowed by a friendly British Colony, than by a hostile State, which was the position previously. But if the Cape people think there is any deliberate desire to put them back, on the part either of the people or the Government of the Transvaal, it is a complete mistake. . . . For my own part, I can confidently say that I will never allow the accident of my being Governor of the Transvaal to lead me into any unfairness to the Cape. I hold most strongly that my duty is to one part of South Africa just as much as to another—neither more nor less—and I have a very warm feeling towards the loyalists of the Cape Colony. . . .

A clash of inter-colonial ambitions was revealed when the time came for settling the claims of Natal for an enlargement of territory, in compensation for what she had suffered by the Boer invasion. The subject had long been under the consideration of all concerned (*v.* Chs. I and VIII). Natal felt strongly that she was entitled both to a section of the Transvaal, and to a considerable slice of Orange

River territory. From the Transvaal, she claimed the districts of Vryheid, Utrecht, Piet Retief and Wakkerstroom, part of which had been filched from her by the Boers in 1883, and created an awkward frontier between the Colony and Zululand. From the Orange River she demanded portions of the Harrismith and Vrede districts. This extension of territory was ardently desired for railway, farming, and commercial reasons. The Lieutenant-Governor represented on behalf of Ministers (Feb. 28, 1902) that it was justified by the unprovoked onslaughts made upon Natal by the late Orange Free State, and the absolute necessity of having a frontier zone in advance of the Drakensberg range. Major Goold-Adams on the other hand declared, on behalf of the Orange River Colony (30/11/01), that such a partition of territory was undesirable from every point of view. In the Transvaal, cession of any territory was equally unpopular.

After consultations with the Government of Natal, the High Commissioner arrived at a compromise with regard to the territory formerly belonging to the South African Republic, which seemed to him more judicious in Natal's own interest than the extension she asked for, and also more desirable in the general interests of South Africa. The compromise provided for the cession of the districts of Vryheid and Utrecht, and part of that of Wakkerstroom. In return, Natal was to shoulder £700,000 of the Transvaal debt. This arrangement Milner submitted in a despatch to the Secretary of State (14/12/01). As to the claim to Orange River territory, he had at first been opposed to it, but admitted that he was influenced by the arguments put forward by the Natal Ministry. Chamberlain agreed to the first and rejected the second proposal, for reasons given in a despatch, March 8.[1]

Though it was inevitable that disappointment should be felt when the decision made became known, Milner was not without hope that it would prove to have been for the best.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir H. McCallum.

21/3/02. . . . Personally, I believe the result is more to the advantage of Natal, than if it had incorporated more territory. But of course I do not expect Natal to take that view. We shall be abused for not giving her more on your side, and equally abused by the people here for giving up Vryheid and Utrecht on the other. Where both contending parties are dissatisfied, I think the arbiter may flatter himself that he has probably made a fair judgment. . . .

[1] Cd. 941 ; Milner Papers, XVIII, iii, 19–31.

Suspension Movement at the Cape.

Meanwhile the state of affairs in the Cape Colony continued to present a political problem of peculiar difficulty.[1] It was intensified rather than ameliorated by the prospect of peace. For with the coming of peace, the demand for the meeting of Parliament must grow insistent. Yet if Parliament met as at present constituted, or after an election held under the old register, there seemed every probability that the Bond would command a small majority. In that case the duty of indemnifying acts done under Martial Law and of punishing rebels would be at the discretion of a party which sympathized with rebellion, and many of whose leading officials had been found guilty of high treason. Such a situation would quickly become intolerable. Suspension of the Constitution would then be unavoidable. But it would only take place after bitter debates in the House, and the stirring up of racial antagonism as a political issue at an election. Milner, as these papers have shown, had long foreseen this issue. The outbreak of the Second Rebellion after the Session of 1900 had confirmed his forebodings, and convinced him that it would be infinitely wiser, in the interests of British and Dutch alike, for the Imperial Parliament to intervene, and either to suspend the Cape Constitution wholly forthwith, or to place the rebellious border districts under a separate Crown Colony Government. In the latter event, loyalists in the remaining part of the Colony would be left in control of the situation. The Progressive party, however, disliked the idea of breaking up the Colony. The alternative of complete suspension therefore imposed itself. Milner saw in it one great advantage. If the Cape were placed under the same form of government as the new Colonies, they could all be developed *pari passu* on the lines which he envisaged, leading towards Federation.

These views Milner had urged in letters ever since December, 1899, and in conversations with Chamberlain when in England.[2] Chamberlain, however, shrank from arousing political opposition, certainly at home, and possibly in the Colonies, by exercising the authority of Imperial Parliament to interfere with the institutions of a self-governing Colony. Milner was not moved by these considerations.

He held that if a strongly signed petition forced the question

[1] See Ch. VIII, p. 272. [2] See Ch. I, p. 33; II, p. 56 ff.; V, p. 182.

to the front, the principle of intervention by the Imperial Government must receive support from those who realized the position. For the Constitution in reality had already suspended itself. The statutory time for a new registration expired in February ; Parliament, which by law must meet within a twelvemonth of its last sitting, had not met for eighteen months ; and every penny spent since July had been illegally spent. It was no longer, then, so much a matter of suspending the Constitution, as of rectifying a situation which had arisen from an existing suspension. The present Government was wholly illegal and unconstitutional, outside the range of Martial Law. It was, in fact, a Crown Colony Government with Sprigg as Governor responsible to nobody, Sprigg as Dictator. Loyal as he was, Sir Gordon's love of power would almost certainly induce him to make the damaging concessions to the Bond which would be necessary to retain office, if Parliament, as at present constituted, were to meet in the autumn. For the leaders of the Bond would be content to keep him in office with the semblance of power, so long as they could ensure the safety and progress of their subterranean propaganda.

The only alternative Prime Minister was Cecil Rhodes. But, at the beginning of 1902, Rhodes was in England, and ill. It seemed doubtful if he would ever be able to return to South Africa. If he did, and were in possession of his old force, he might so galvanize and consolidate the Progressive party that it would be able to hold office without subservience to the Bond. The leaders of the Bond made an astute move. They invited him to return and take the reins, promising their support, and that bygones should be bygones. Rhodes was too old a bird to be caught by such chaff. He did return in January, but to espouse with characteristic vehemence the policy of suspending the Constitution.

Milner wrote to him privately explaining his views (30/1/02). Either the rebellious districts must be placed under temporary autocratic civil government and disfranchised, or the Constitution Ordinance be revised, with provisions for a new register and redistribution of seats. But he made it plain that there was no chance of the Imperial Parliament intervening to do either of these things, unless there were a strong and fairly unanimous appeal by the loyalists to Great Britain.

Milner wrote in the same sense to Mr. T. Lynedoch Graham, the Hon. A. Wilmot, Dr. (Sir Starr) Jameson, Sir Lewis Michell, and other leaders of the Progressive party, who consulted him at

this time.[1] For though chary of interfering in Cape local affairs, he regarded the situation as so serious, with Rhodes ill and Sprigg trimming his sails, that he ought not to withhold his advice when it was asked for.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson.

High Commissioner's Office, Johannesburg. 30/1/02. [private and confidential] . . . A lot of people have been asking me, by letter or interview, what I advised as to the present political situation. . . . To all I have made the following points. (1) That it would be a mistake for Parlt. to meet now, and the longer the meeting can be put off, the better. (2) That I have no faith in the plan of relying on a few converted Bondsmen to get us out of our difficulties. I quite believe they would be willing to help us out of our immediate difficulties, supply, indemnity, &c., but to be dependent on them would mean powerlessness to deal radically with the situation hereafter. (3) That I do not believe personally that there is any way out except with the help of the Imperial Parliament. The Govt. at home loathes the idea of suspending the Constitution. But it should be put to them that the *Constitution having broken down*, they have not only the right, but the duty to put it on its legs again. . . . (4) That, if the home Govt. is to act at all, it must be in response to an appeal from the loyal Colonists. This ought to proceed from the Govt. backed by you, and supported, if need be, by a popular agitation, in which case no doubt I could wake responsive echoes in England and even in the other Colonies. The keynote of all would be, *the loyalists must be put in a position to help themselves*. . . . But (5) to get anything done at home, there must be a fair degree of unanimity among the loyalists themselves as to what they ask for. They ought to agree on a policy, and go for it solid. In that case I can help a lot. But I can't take the initiative. I can only come in as a backer. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Charles Boyd.[2]

31/1/02. [very confidential] . . . Many thanks for sending me the paper on the future of the Colony by Mr. W. B. Worsfold. I am greatly struck by the ability and knowledge which he shows, and reluctantly admit that the picture he draws is only too true. There is no doubt whatever in my mind that the Dutch will try, for a time at least, to recover by politics what they have lost in

[1] Milner Papers, XLVIII, iii, 10 ; XXXVI, iii, 52.
[2] Political Secretary to Cecil Rhodes.

arms, and that the Cape Colony will be their base of operations. . . . I have declared myself in favour of a suspension of the Constitution. But I am not prepared to say that suspension pure and simple, especially in the position into which things have now got, would be the best course. It is not an end in itself—rather the contrary. It is only a means to an end ; our whole object being that the Executive power in the Cape Colony during the next few critical years should be in loyal hands. . . . There are various methods which might be adopted, but they all have this in common, that they involve some degree of interference from Home—some measure to be passed by the Imperial Parliament. They all require for their accomplishment the overthrow of the fetish, that it is impossible to deal with the internal affairs of a Colony, even if the safety of the Empire is involved, when once you have given that Colony self-government. Such a doctrine is of course inconsistent with any working theory of Empire. If we had a real Imperial Parliament, instead of a local Parliament calling itself Imperial, such an absurdity would not be tolerated for a moment. But for the present it is formidable, and if we are going to do anything effective in the Cape Colony, it has first to be broken down. If this could be achieved, if the following two ideas could be rammed into the heads of the British people : (1) That the political dice in the Colony were long ago loaded against the loyalists, and there is no means of unloading them locally ; and (2) that this being the case, the Imperial Parliament is bound to interfere as trustee of the general interests of the Empire, then I think that when the moment comes, and the choice is put before Great Britain : " Will you allow the Bond to re-establish its authority in Cape Colony, or take an unusual course to prevent it ? " the latter alternative will be chosen. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson.

JOHANNESBURG. 5/3/02. [SECRET AND PERSONAL] . . . I am absolutely convinced myself of the necessity of intervention from home to put the Cape Colony straight and prevent its being a drag on all S. African progress. And I am not the least afraid of " bearding Joe " about it, tho' he hates it and loses his temper with me when I tell him what he is in for. It is the only important point in connection with S. Africa, about which he and I are at cross purposes. . . . At the same time I feel that, if I am right in my diagnosis of the state of public feeling at the Cape, viz. that virtually all the British (except a few office-holders) and not a few of the modern Afrikanders *in their hearts*, long for a period of Crown Government, *Joe ought to know it*. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Charles Boyd.

15/3/02. . . . What the Cape Colony wants is some years of thoroughly sound and loyal administration, not hostile to the Dutch *qua* Dutch, perfectly impartial, but setting its face firmly against treason and truckling with treason. By a large and increasing section of the Dutch impartial Crown Government would certainly be welcomed. They don't want any more Bond, or political agitation of any kind. But given speeches, meetings, elections, the whole paraphernalia of a ceaseless political contest, *turning solely on the race question*, they must *nolentes volentes* go " with their own people." In the absence of this truly damnable and wholly unnecessary political turmoil, no draconic measures of repression would be necessary. All the fundamental institutions of the country will be undisturbed ; life will resume its normal course. You will simply have a few years without legislation, a nominee Legislature, if any Legislature is necessary, dealing simply with current business, such as budget, and *with an Executive Government responsible not to Parliament but to the Crown*, i.e. servants not of the Bond, but of the Empire. They might be all, or mostly, local men. No " Downing Street " is necessary, though a good fresh element from home would be useful. But they would not be exposed to local political influences. That is the point,—under no temptation to wink at treason in order to secure a doubtful vote. So far from being a violent situation, this would be a pacific and a merciful one. You would get rid of Martial Law. Moreover, with the Executive Power in safe hands, a wide measure of amnesty to the rank and file of rebels would be possible. No one wishes to punish the common Boer rebel for the sake of punishing him. If he has lost his rifle, and can't vote for a rebel member, in order that the member himself may vote for a rotten Government, he is harmless. Let him go back to his farm. Lastly, this is the way to Federation. The great obstacles to Federation are a lot of sovereign local Parliaments. At present we have only one such,—Natal. My idea is *now* (I have not always held this view, but got to it by experience and reflection. It was always, I think, Rhodes's), that it would be a mistake to multiply Colonial Parliaments (for the same reason it is a mistake to revive the Cape Parliament) until you can create a Federal Parliament, with very comprehensive powers, to keep what will then be only subordinate provincial Legislatures in order. A number of small sovereign Parliaments, with their little jacks in office of responsible Ministers and their factitious local patriotisms, will delay the big thing. They would do this in any case, even if they were all British, and all imperially

minded. They will do it much more—in fact they may perhaps not only delay, but altogether prevent it, if some of them, if *one of them*, is Afrikander, and anti-Imperial. Let the restoration of local self-government at the Cape wait till you have a Federal Parliament for South Africa, which will have a British majority. Then Dutch antics, in a provincial Legislature, will be comparatively innocuous. The creation of such a Federal Parliament will take some years. You must give us time to thoroughly anglicize the Transvaal. But it need not take *many* years, if you have the Cape in hand. But with the Cape independent—and obstructive—how long will it take?

Stimulated by Rhodes, the demand for suspension gathered force both among the British and the Dutch Afrikanders. Rhodes persuaded practically all the Progressive members (45) to sign a petition for the temporary suspension of the Constitution (Cd. 1162, No. I, Encl. 2). On March 17, a deputation proposed to Sir Gordon Sprigg that the Government should invite the Imperial Parliament to pass an Act simultaneously abrogating the old and granting a new Constitution. In this respect precedents had been set by Jamaica, British Honduras, and some of the Leeward Islands. It was proposed that the new Constitution should include a re-distribution scheme, assigning two members to each 2,000 voters. The Colony would then be secured against the machinations of the Bond. Without redistribution, parties would remain so equally balanced as to render the Bond master of the situation. Sprigg, however, was utterly opposed to Suspension. His plan was to summon Parliament in October, when he hoped for a majority of 8 or 10.

Unfortunately, almost immediately after the Petition had been signed, Rhodes fell seriously ill. In the absence of his forceful leadership, Sprigg was encouraged in his resistance to the Petition, whilst those who had been half-hearted in their support of it came over to his side. Sprigg feared lest suspension of the Constitution would be tantamount to handing over the Colony to military dictatorship, Kitchener having refused to guarantee that there should be no military interference. He raised the bogy of the tyranny of Downing Street. The Colony, he prophesied, would be flooded with impossible younger sons for whom the Colonial Office would insist on finding places. Moreover, the Colony would be powerless to make its voice heard on the question of Federation, and would be sacrificed to the influence of Johannesburg. Most

terrible of all, perhaps, was the fear lest he himself would no longer be Dictator, but be subject to some Governor's will.

Death of Cecil Rhodes.

On March 26 Rhodes died. The first cause of his return to South Africa had been a characteristic determination to "face the music," and to give evidence in the case of some promissory notes alleged to have been drawn or endorsed by him in favour of a foreign lady of title, the authenticity of which he denied. Rhodes, though suffering from a cold, gave evidence, and swore that he had never signed any promissory notes in her favour.

"Rhodes," Sir Lewis Michell wrote to Lord Milner, "was quite sublime. . . . He sat while giving his evidence, and cross-examined the barrister, who should have cross-examined him. . . ."

The Chief Justice (Sir H. de Villiers) declared the signatures to be "clearly an absolute forgery." But the worry and fatigue of the trial proved too much for Rhodes's strength (Milner Papers, XX, ii, 119 ff.; XXXVIII, ii, 205).

Sir Abe Bailey permits me to record that Rhodes's last words to him, before he was removed to die at Muizenberg, were: "They tell me I am going to die. I must live five years. I must live five years. But you have Milner. But you have Milner."

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

20/3/02. . . . We are daily expecting to hear news of Rhodes's death. It is a great blow. One cannot but feel the deepest sympathy for him in not living to see the object of his great hopes accomplished. And certainly there has never been a time since first I came to South Africa when I have wanted him more. That sounds egotistical, but I mean when *the work* has wanted him more. It is like the Evil Fate, which has dogged us all along, which took Garrett away at the critical moment, etc., etc. . . .

Rhodes was buried according to his wish at the entrance of the Matoppo Hills near Bulawayo. The journey to the north was marked by scenes of devotion to the great leader, which greatly moved the imagination of South Africans.

Extract from Letter. Colonel Frank Rhodes to Lord Milner.

11/4/02. . . . We have left Cecil alone in the hills, everything was wonderfully arranged and carried out without a hitch. . . . The natives are very pleased, and think Cecil has come there

to be able to talk to Mosilikatze.[1] They gave him the Royal Salutes of their own accord. . . .

Before sailing for South Africa, Rhodes had derived much benefit from a visit to Scotland. Although his heart gave great cause for anxiety, Dr. Jameson believed that, if he took great care of himself, he might yet live for years (Milner Papers, XXXVIII, ii, 200). Whilst in Scotland, he had expressed his desire to include Lord Milner among the Trustees of his famous Will. Though precluded from taking any immediate share in the administration of it, Milner, as soon as he was quit of his official position, devoted much time and his great financial ability to the conduct of the Trust. Rhodes made specific suggestions to Milner as to the disposal of any surplus from the Scholarship fund. He was so far from being a mere Internationalist, as is sometimes represented, that he desired such surplus money to be used for promoting the unity and strength of the British Empire. With that object, he suggested that it should be applied particularly to settlement on the land of British emigrants to South Africa. He also contemplated the development by its aid of a party in England devoted entirely to Imperial purposes. (Milner Papers, XXXVIII, ii, 200.)

Extract from Letter. Earl Grey to Lord Milner.

18/12/01. . . . When I was staying with Rhodes at Rannoch last August he showed me the letter you had written to him on the subject of his will, and expressed the desire to add your name to the list of the Trustees appointed by the Will. No announcement could have given me greater pleasure. For I know no one so well qualified as you are to administer Rhodes's Trust in the interest of the Empire, and no one with whom I should prefer to be associated as Co-Trustee. . . . I wish you could have heard the way in which C. J. spoke of you. He gave expression to his great admiration for you in the warmest and most emphatic manner. He asked me to sit down and write a letter at his dictation from him to me. I enclose a copy. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Earl Grey.

May, /02. . . . It is quite evident that I shall not be able, while High Commissioner, to take any active part in the administration of Rhodes's affairs. Indeed I should have renounced the position, if I had not anticipated that the Trust may be of importance

[1] King of the Matabele, father of Lobengula.

for the next 30 years, while, with the termination of my career here, I intend to terminate my connection with the Public Services. This has long been my resolve. As a private individual, I might be a useful Trustee hereafter. . . .

On Rhodes's death, Milner accepted the position of a " member of a Council for administering a fund for educational purposes," with the proviso that his active participation must be deferred for the present (Milner Papers, XXXVIII, ii ; XLVIII, iii, 8).

The Suspension Movement.

After Rhodes's death, the Loyalists suffered for lack of his controlling and unifying force. The party " broke up into small squads," as Dr. Jameson put it.[1] The prospect was that when Parliament met, the Government would be defeated, and if an election were held on the old register all hope of obtaining a loyal majority was gone, now that Rhodes's influence had been removed. Sprigg, however, convinced as ever that the salvation of the country depended on his retaining office, hoped to do so by forming an alliance with the Bond under the ægis of Hofmeyr. In any case, the direction of affairs must pass into the hands of the disloyalists. For these reasons, the leaders of the movement for a petition, including Mr. (Sir) E. H. Walton, General Brabant, the Hon. A. Wilmot, Colonel F. Schermbrücker, Mr. Amos Bailey, and Colonel (Sir) Charles Crewe, were anxious to proceed with it.

Whilst understanding Chamberlain's reluctance to act, it was thought better that he should do so now upon such a request, than be compelled to act presently, when men who were openly disloyal would be holding office by virtue of a Parliamentary majority (Milner Papers, XXXVI, iii, 71). Others were less certain. They had been willing to leave the settlement of all subsequent questions in Rhodes's hands, once suspension had been granted. But, led by Sir Henry Juta, they now began to make conditions and objections. Milner himself was not anxious for the point to be pressed at this juncture, nor did he think the petition itself very discreetly worded. But he was wholly in favour of the principle that people who had been " shooting at us for the last two years as rebels in the field, should not be allowed to outvote us at the ballot boxes as soon as the war is over." Apart from that, he thought it would be monstrous " to give that frightful incentive to racial passion, which first a heated session of Parliament, and then

[1] Milner Papers, XXXIII, iii, 286.

a General Election, fought exclusively on the war and the race issue, would now undoubtedly provide " (Milner Papers, XXXI, ii, 169).

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to (Sir) Lewis Michell.

11/4/02. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . The more I think of the future, the more I see that the Cape Colony is the " Achilles' heel " of the cause of progress and British supremacy in South Africa. I presume that the events of the last month, and especially its central tragic event,[1] have resulted in the virtual dropping of the petition. But the question itself cannot be dropped—it will come back upon us over and over again and every time, like the Sybil, with increased insistence and demanding a higher price. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson.

11/4/02. . . . I have been reading your despatch of 24th March about State-aided Schools. I hope the S. of S. will continue to worry the matter. . . . As for Ministers legislating on the subject, I know they won't try, and, if they did, I don't believe they could carry any reform. The majority of the House will, after as before, consist of people who either wish to screen disloyalty, or are afraid to attack it. Still, the great thing is to keep their heads to the fence, even if they keep on refusing it. This will help to bring home to H.M.G. and everybody the realities of the situation, which decades of humbug, and hiding our heads in the sand, have obscured. What I am perfectly convinced of is this, that there is not one of the things most necessary to the peace of South Africa, as far as it depends on the Cape Colony,—reform of education, arms act, exclusion of rebels from political power, &c., &c., which the Colony left to itself and its " constitutional " Government will effect. Not one. If that is rubbed in on every possible occasion—who can escape the inference?

Extract from Letter. Mr. (Lord) Haldane to Lord Milner.

13/5/02. . . . I gather that you are quite clearly of opinion that the constitution ought to be suspended for a period by Imperial Act. If this is your deliberate view, I not only should not question it, but should do everything in my power to help, and so would, I think, Asquith. . . . I have absolute confidence in your judgment. . . .

It happened that in April Milner went down to spend a fortnight at the seaside, staying at Muizenburg at the house of Sir Herbert Baker, the eminent architect, who was evolving a South African

[1] Death of Cecil Rhodes.

style of architecture. There the members of the Vigilance Committee called on him, and invited his opinion on the points which were causing doubts and dissension—the date, for instance, when, if suspended, the Constitution would be restored, and so forth (28/4/02). Milner met the Committee two days later at Cape Town, and explained his views on the situation. Speaking as a private individual, he satisfied the Progressive Members on the questions they had raised. It was not, he said, a question of abrogating the Constitution, which was already abrogated, but of when and how they were to return to it. He was in favour of a gradual return to self-government, for after a civil war, a period when political controversy should be avoided was necessary. The Colony was like a man recovering from an attack of fever. An interregnum of carefully regulated diet and change of air was indicated.[1]

It was then decided to present the Petition, signed by forty-two members, to the Governor (May 10). Recognizing that Chamberlain required to be assured that the majority of the people desired suspension, the Progressive members also decided to continue to keep the Petition before the public for signature. In the event of suspension not being granted, further support of Sir Gordon Sprigg would depend entirely upon whether his Ministry would push forward such measures as the signatories deemed necessary for the establishment on a firm and lasting basis of British interests and Imperial supremacy in South Africa. Such measures would include an act of indemnity, suppression of sedition, registration of arms, immigration and land settlement, redistribution of seats, and an act providing for such an alteration in the educational system, as would effectually prevent Government-aided schools from being used for propagating sedition and treason.[2] Hely-Hutchinson forwarded the Petition to Milner, together with a letter in which the signatories invited an expression of opinion by the High Commissioner.

Milner replied in a letter to the Governor. Premising that it would not be proper for him to enter into any discussion of the Petition, unless he were officially invited to do so, he treated the letter which accompanied it as standing in a different category. To the personal appeal of the writers he could not refuse to reply. He therefore enclosed an unofficial letter to be communicated to them, re-stating the views with which the reader is already

[1] Milner Papers, XXII, i, 20; XXXIII, i, 4. [2] *Ib.*, XXII, i, 68.

familiar. On May 10 he sent a long despatch to the Secretary of State on the political situation in the Cape Colony. This was followed by another on the 31st and by similar despatches from Hely-Hutchinson.[1]

Milner's letter to the Loyalists was published in the Cape Press (May 19). It was a calculated indiscretion, but an indiscretion. Milner himself acknowledged that it was a mistake in tactics to be thus forced into the open. But he felt bound to help the Loyalists, who were confused and leaderless. He thought that public opinion at home might be pushed into supporting the action by Parliament, which Chamberlain was loth to take. As the following correspondence shows, the publication of the letter produced a crisis in his relations with the Secretary of State. Chamberlain, not unnaturally, felt hurt at such a step being taken without his being consulted. But he behaved with great tact and magnanimity. Not only did he make a generous defence of Milner in public, but he also refused to regard the incident as of sufficient importance to justify the High Commissioner's retirement. When Milner, in the face of so grave a misunderstanding, asked to be relieved of his office, Chamberlain assured him that the public as a whole, and himself personally, would regard his resignation as a serious blow to the interests of Great Britain. And in the House of Commons, he affirmed in the most complete manner that the confidence of the Government was not in the slightest degree lessened by the difference which had occurred. "For the future," he added, "we regard Lord Milner as the most effective instrument in our possession." In spite of this momentary difference, the official relationship of these two strong, clear-sighted statesmen remained unbroken, if not always unruffled. For each was confident in the loyalty of the other to ideals far transcending personal considerations.

Extract from Letter. Lady Edward Cecil to Lord Milner.

21/6/02. . . . There is an immense party here (Panshanger). . . . I went in to dinner with Joe, who asked me at once, with characteristic directness, what I heard . . . about suspension, and said, "Is it possible he (Milner) has been indiscreet with these people?" . . . It was the first approach to a criticism of you that I have ever heard from him, and perhaps a natural, though a very mistaken one. . . . I told him exactly what had passed, and how, over and over again, you had steered the Progressive

[1] Milner Papers, XLIV, iii, 125, 160.

Party past reefs and rocks by taking a part not constitutionally yours. I described the progress of the Treason Bill. Joe (he is very naturally sympathetic, for my father's sake [1]) understood at once, and retracted the critical note. . . . I only just had to put the picture of the helplessness of that Party before him. . . . Joe was delightful. I was conscious of that moderation which his ready and quick understanding always induces in me. . . . He is not played out as the other Ministers are, not fussed. Calm and strong, determined, simple, owning his mistakes and his power of making them. Saying of his Colonials, Seddon in particular, "I feel sure they would make allowance for one's mistakes in the knowledge of one's good intentions." . . . 22/6/02. . . . I went out for a long walk with Chamberlain to-day. He talked unadulterated South Africa and suspension, and after half an hour's hemming and hawing over this last subject, and saying there were no "new facts," I got him out into the open. He thought a long time before he spoke plainly, looking hard at me to see if I was to be trusted. "What I want," he said, "in all these matters is a *case*. The case is not good enough now to present to the public." . . . I said, "You mean, if the Cape Parliament meets and won't punish the rebels, that you would interfere?" "Yes, very likely, on any *glaring* ground, but until I get my case, I am not going to say what I am going to do." . . . He impressed me with a sense of strength, but it is what you have always said, he will back up, but he won't suggest. . . .

On being informed of Milner's action, Chamberlain cabled (24/6/02) that he was "dismayed and seriously embarrassed" by the publication of the letter, and warned the High Commissioner not to commit H.M. Government (Milner Papers LI, x). He felt that he had made his own position quite clear, and that throughout all these difficult years he had supported Milner with the utmost loyalty. "Under these circumstances," he added, "I am deeply hurt to find that in a matter of cardinal importance in which I desired the utmost caution, you should have fully expressed your views to private individuals, without giving me the opportunity of considering them beforehand." . . .

The growing spirit of conciliation, which had been manifest in the Colony since the conclusion of peace, seemed to him to give increased prospect of some such compromise as he had suggested in May, and he hoped that Milner would be able to reconcile his views with those therein expressed. Milner replied:

[1] Admiral Maxse.

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

28/6/02. . . . Am deeply grieved to cause you annoyance or embarrassment, as I fully recognize all I owe to your support in the past critical years. But for it I must have failed, and I shall always feel most grateful to you. As regards action you complain of, I was more than careful not to commit H.M. Government. I risked only myself, and that I did deliberately, though reluctantly, because I felt bound in honour to help these Cape loyalists who, deprived of their real leader, were being given away by their nominal chiefs. Attempt on part of Cape Ministry to stifle expression of opinion on part of their fellows was intolerable, and in view of fables freely put about as to my attitude I had no choice but to state my true opinion. Details by letter, too long for telegram, will, I hope, greatly modify your view of personal aspect of matter. But nothing can alter fact that on this important question my action has been disapproved by you. It is impossible for me to go back on opinions which I have expressed, and which I hold as strongly as ever. But I shall of course abstain from further expression of them, or from any dealing whatever with political questions at Cape. I shall gladly devote myself exclusively to urgent business up here, which by itself threatens to overtax my strength. . . .

Extract from Telegram. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

2/7/02. I deeply regret that any serious difference should have arisen between us as to policy, and hope that time and progress of events will remove it. I rely on your co-operation so far as you can honestly give it to prevent ill consequences to public interest. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Selborne to Lord Milner.

6/7/02. . . . Chamberlain asked me if you would resign. I said I would bet my last dollar you would not, because your duty to the Empire was the only thing you thought of, never your personal feelings, and that your great life's work in South Africa is not yet done, you know full well. Now I have told you everything, except that Chamberlain also judged you so. . . .

On receiving a full letter of explanation from Milner,[1] Chamberlain replied :

[1] Dated June 27. No copy of it exists among the Milner Papers. But it is evident, from the following correspondence, that Milner proposed that his resignation on grounds of health should be accepted at the earliest convenient moment.

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

24/7/02. . . . I wish you to feel that I do not attach exaggerated importance to the difference of opinion which has arisen between us on a matter of policy. It seems to me that such differences are inevitable in the situation in which we find ourselves. It is hardly possible that two men separated by great distances should arrive uniformly at exactly the same conclusion on the hundred and one important questions which continually come up for settlement. Where, as in our case, there exists mutual confidence and respect, we can well be content to regard the policy as a whole and not to allow a general agreement to be in any way disturbed by occasional divergences. In such a case it is our duty, as I am sure it is our wish, to minimize the difference, and above all to give no cause to the enemy to blaspheme or to separate our positions and to sow dissension amongst our followers. The principle which should govern our relations is that which governs all Cabinets, namely, that there should be absolute frankness in our private relations and full discussion of all matters of common interest, and that the decisions finally arrived at should be loyally supported and considered as the decisions of the whole of the Government, or of the parties concerned in the discussion. Of course, there may be occasions in which the difference is of so vital a character that it is impossible for the minority or the party whose views are rejected to continue their support, and in this case the Ministry breaks up or the minority member, or members, resigns. But this is certainly not our case at present. Important as is the policy to be pursued in Cape Colony, it is not an absolute essential part of your general administration. On all the main lines of the latter I believe we are in entire agreement, or at all events, if there are differences they are of no great importance, and either of us might give way to the other without difficulty. Whatever happens at the Cape, you have practically a free hand in the two Colonies, and can lay securely the foundations for their future. . . .

Turning now to the latter part of your letter and a consideration of the future, I think you will have understood from what precedes that I do not think our present divergence should make any difference at all in regard to your plans and position. There is a great work to be done for the Empire in South Africa—greater even than all that has arisen in connection with the war, and there is nobody who by natural ability and local experience can better perform that work than yourself. It seems to me, therefore, that apart from all personal considerations, it is your duty to remain, and to carry this work as far as your health

will permit. It has fallen to you to lay the foundations on which British supremacy must ultimately rest. You have all the strings in your hand and you have—all the more perhaps because of the views you have taken in the recent controversy—the confidence of those whose loyal and strenuous co-operation is necessary to success. You can do more than anyone else to moderate the extreme views of the loyalists in South Africa, and at the same time to maintain a firm control over anti-British agitation and opposition. I hope, therefore, you will allow me to consider the latter part of your letter as still unwritten. Of course, if at any time the question of health becomes a serious one, I should be the last to press upon you the continuance of labours which have become too heavy for you to bear, but on no other ground could I assent, either in the interests of the Empire or of your own reputation, to any curtailment of the services which have hitherto been so efficiently rendered.

I hope that the arrangements recently made, and especially the appointment of Lawley as Lieutenant-Governor of the Transvaal, will relieve you of much detail, and that you will be able to give your full and undivided attention to the principles on which administration in future is to be carried on. I do not anticipate any serious difference between us in regard to these principles. They must be worked in South Africa with due regard to local opinion and local circumstances, and, if I judge your own feeling aright, you would not like to leave while this crowning work was incomplete, and when the ideas for which you have laboured might be misapprehended or inefficiently carried out by a successor without your knowledge and experience. I shall be glad to know by return that you are able to accept this view of the situation, which, in that case, I shall consider as entirely unchanged by recent events, leaving me to count as before on your loyal co-operation in the difficult task which still lies before us. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

6/9/02. I have to thank you for your kind letter of July 24th, as well as for the generous manner in which you defended me in the House of Commons on the 29th July. I am glad you felt able to speak in those terms. It would have grieved me very much if my action in the matter of the Cape Constitution, which I do not (wish ?) further to discuss, had caused me in any way to forfeit your personal regard. With respect to my position here, however, I regret that I cannot alter the opinion expressed in my letter of June 27th, though perhaps, at this distance of time, I should alter certain expressions. I am most anxious that you should

not think that that opinion was formed in any "huff" about an incident, for which I was to some extent to blame, but to which I do not attach after your letter, exaggerated importance. I never had the childish idea of resigning, leaving everything here at sixes and sevens, and seriously embarrassing the Government because I was overruled even on an important matter. As you say, differences of opinion must arise, and I cannot expect always to have my own way. But a thing, which is not in itself of first-rate moment, may be significant as a symptom and a warning. What my failure to prevent the Cape relapsing into the hands of the Bond—not by itself, but coming on the top of a series of events all teaching the same lesson—has brought home to me, is that I am out of touch with the predominant sentiment of my countrymen, the trend of opinion which ultimately determines policy, on the South African question. This has not always been the case, nor is the divergence of which I have been increasingly conscious for some time past, and which perhaps is as much due to a change in my views as to a change elsewhere, as yet generally recognized. It is highly desirable that it never should be.

It is for this reason that I am anxious to quit the field, while I can do so in peace, without discredit, and with a really good pretext. The last three years have really told upon me physically, and this can occasion no surprise. . . . Just for the moment, till the immediate mess of the war is cleaned up and the administration fairly on its legs, I can see that I may be, if not indispensable, at any rate more useful than any new man.

But as soon as we are out of this present jungle,—and another six months ought to see us through it—a new man will have immense advantages. He will not be "stale," in itself a most important point in a position requiring constant alertness and tireless energy. He will not excite the same hostility as I do among the Boers or their friends at home. He will be able to take "conciliation" seriously. If he does not trust the Boers (which I pray he may not do), he will be better able to pretend to trust them than I am, weary as I feel of their eternal duplicity. As regards the English, he will, no doubt, at first not have anything like my influence. But, on the other hand, that influence cannot always, or long, remain what it is to-day. Indeed, I have already drawn heavily on my capital in that respect, and shall have to draw more in the immediate future. I do not complain of this. I feel that my popularity is not being *wasted*, but is being legitimately *used up* in securing public objects of importance. If, for instance, I can get the finances of this Colony put on a sound basis, leaving room for expansion here, and yet providing some substantial contribution to War Debt, such as people at home expect, if I can get such a settlement through *without a big row* (I

doubt whether any new man could do it), it will be worth while to strain even severely the gratitude and attachment of people here, to get that bone of contention safely laid on the shelf. With this thorny question disposed of, my successor will be able to face the next set of problems with much better heart than I, because he will presumably have some sort of belief in what he is doing. I assume that he will have that robust faith in self-governing institutions which is the birthright of every sound-hearted Briton, but which in my case has been unfortunately dissipated by experiences which I trust are exceptional. What I have seen of the working of "responsible government" in South Africa, makes it totally impossible for me to labour for its extension with any sort of zeal, even if I do not absolutely show the cloven hoof of political heresy in connection with it. Of course I know it must come—and pretty soon. Our own people are as determined to have it, as they will be sorry for themselves when they have got it. But it is surely better that the way should be paved for its establishment by someone who regards it as a desirable thing in itself, and not simply as a deplorable necessity.

The upshot is, and I always come back to it after renewed reflection, that the things most necessary in the early future are (i) the early settlement of the financial question—the Big Loan and the basis of our contribution to cost of war—and (ii) the choice of my successor. When you have fixed on him, I only ask for so much notice as may enable me to take the first step, by applying for my release (on the ground of my need for prolonged rest), and to look after people to whom I am under special obligations, and whom I would not like to have suddenly to turn adrift. In the meantime I shall say absolutely nothing. There was some rumour (pure conjecture) at the time of your constitution despatch, that I was going, but it has *entirely subsided.* I am working on quietly, and I shall work with all the more cheerfulness and energy because I believe that relief is somewhere in the offing. . . .

Chamberlain remained firmly convinced that suspension by the Imperial Government was most undesirable, and indeed in the present circumstances almost impossible. As he explained to several members of the Cape Assembly who saw him at Downing Street, such action might be taken to prevent rebellion or financial chaos. But to suspend the Constitution for the purpose of carrying a Redistribution Bill against the wishes of a Parliamentary majority, would generate great bitterness, and would almost certainly not be sanctioned by the House of Commons. He thought that the moderate Dutch might be brought into some agreement, by which

an Indemnity bill and a reasonable measure of Redistribution might be passed, if only to avoid the imposition of more extreme measures by the Imperial Government. He suggested a conference of the political leaders with that object.[1]

Although nine-tenths of his supporters were in favour of suspension, Sprigg remained determined to fight against it to the last. He drew up a Minute informing the Home Government of the Ministry's objection. Dr. Smartt thereupon resigned (May 29), and with Sir David Gill roused many crowded meetings to the utmost enthusiasm in support of Rhodes's policy. Sprigg, on the other hand, held a public meeting to denounce it. He was supported by Merriman, who denounced the movement as an attempt by the Governor and High Commissioner "to deprive us of our freedom." The interests of the Colony, it was hinted, nay, even its territory, would be sacrificed to the new Colonies, if the constitution were suspended (Milner Papers, XXXVII, ii, 268).

Sprigg then sailed for London to attend the Coronation and the Colonial Conference. There he assured Chamberlain that he was certain of a majority, and would be able to carry all necessary measures. Chamberlain thought the wisest policy was to allow the Cape Parliament to meet, and not to take action unless it should prove itself intractable to the whole world.[2] He was confirmed in this course by conversations with the Representatives of other Colonies, who held that only in the last resort would so extreme a step as suspension be justifiable. To a despatch from Hely-Hutchinson outlining a proposal for an ad-interim Government, after withdrawal of the constitution, with which Milner fully agreed,[3] Chamberlain replied :

Extract from Telegram. Mr. Chamberlain to Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson.

10/6/02. [STRICTLY SECRET] . . . H.M. Government could not for a moment entertain such a policy without incontrovertible proof that British interests are seriously threatened, and that this policy is absolutely necessary for their maintenance. The Cape Colonists must not be allowed to think that they can appeal to the Imperial Government merely for the purpose of impressing the views of a minority on a majority.

Incontrovertible proof of the sort required could, of course, only be furnished by events which suspension was intended to

[1] Chamberlain to Milner, 19/5/02 ; 20/6/02 ; Milner Papers, LI, i, 8.
[2] Milner Papers, XXXVIII, i, 14. [3] *Ibid.*, XX, iv, 5, 11.

avert. Nor could it be asserted that there was an overwhelming majority of all voters in its favour. Sprigg therefore prevailed, and on July 2 Chamberlain communicated the decision of the Government not to accede to the Petition.[1]

The Loyalists were staggered at the decision. Those who had fought against Dutch supremacy felt that they were thrown back to where they were three years before. They would be at the mercy of the disloyal Dutch. The Afrikander Bond, they foresaw, would now resume its activities. It would ca' canny for a while ; then gradually usurp the governing power and quietly fill up all official appointments with Dutchmen.[2]

Milner, without altering his opinion as to the desirability of suspension, recognized that it was idle for him to pursue the controversy. Feeling that he had done all that he could, publicly and privately, to support the Loyalists, he advised those members of the Progressive party who consulted him, to concentrate on obtaining the measures they deemed necessary for the pacification and security of the Colony, and to co-operate with all who were ready to carry them, but without truckling to treason or making concessions to sedition.[3]

" My advice," he wrote, " is to rally a loyalist and federationist party, prepared to stay out of office, rather than to compromise on principles, and make the best of the situation. Well led, its ultimate triumph is a certainty, and it will be all the stronger for shedding the time-servers."

Thus inspired, they set about the reorganization of the party, with the determination to purge it of the " mugwump " elements at the General Election. Dr. Smartt, a great orator, was elected to lead it.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to James Rendel.

2/8/02. . . . My letter was not an " indiscretion," if by that is meant a piece of thoughtlessness. It was a *very deliberate*, desperate, perhaps questionable, attempt to prevent a tremendous blunder. The blunder has been made. I hardly hoped to succeed, but I am glad I tried. The worst is, it is 100 to 1 that Joe's line will be apparently successful. Anyway, he has given the game out of my and his hands. The Bond can take and keep the Government

[1] Milner Papers, XX, iv, 23, 40, 46 ; XIX, iii, 79 ; Cd. 1162.

[2] *Ibid.*, XXXVIII, ii, 227, 229.

[3] Letters to Charles Don, Charles Southey, Sir L. Michell, etc. (Milner Papers, XXXII, i, 98 ; XXXIV, iii, 259 ; XXXVI, ii, 305).

of Cape Colony, if they have only sense enough to be very moderate at starting. I know them well enough to feel confident that they will. Joe will get his "measures." They will mean nothing. Underneath the surface everything will go to the devil, the bargain of course being that the Bond keep Sprigg in power, and he, as of old, executes their behests, puts in rotten magistrates, snubs loyal ones, shuts his eyes to sedition in the country districts, *especially the schools*, etc., etc. Already a number of our people are beginning to clear from the remoter Districts, and leave the ex-rebels in undisturbed possession. No doubt all this involves no immediate danger, perhaps no *military* danger at any time, tho' it would be unsafe to say that for the long future. But it does mean a fundamental departure from true policy and will have very far-reaching consequences. I do not blame Joe, nor can I ever forget his immense courage, and great support of me in the past. If he knew the situation as intimately as I do, he would never have taken this line—he would sooner have left office. I have done everything that a cruelly overworked man can do to make him understand it. But it is beyond the power of any despatch writer, *even if he were doing nothing else*, to convey to a man 6,000 miles off the same impressions which he himself is deriving every day from all his surroundings, drawing in the air he breathes. The fact is I am, and always have been, rowing against the stream. The tendency of public opinion and feeling in England is to go wrong about South Africa. It needed an ultimatum to *wake them up*, and they will go to sleep again on the first opportunity. *I only just saved* the terms of surrender. It is more than any man can do to avert the consequences of the ignorance, self-sufficiency, proneness to optimistic self-delusion and fetish-worship of shibboleths, which at once resume their sway over John Bull, when you cease kicking him. . . .

The justification of the suspension movement was made plain when the Cape Parliament met in August. The Bond had a majority, and Sprigg's Ministry worked in alliance with it. But the strength of the suspension movement, shown by the 30,000 signatures affixed to the Petition by the end of June, and Chamberlain's hints of Imperial interference, if the necessary measures for pacification were not taken, induced the Bond to permit the passage of Indemnity Acts. Sprigg, on the other hand, in return for this complaisance, made no attempt to pass any measures dealing with sedition or the importation of arms. Long and bitter debates ensued. On September 11 Merriman introduced a motion protesting against the agitation for Suspension. In the course of a

diatribe lasting 95 minutes, much of which sounded oddly on the lips of the representative of the rebels of Wodehouse, he declaimed eloquently on Liberty, and savagely attacked the Governor and High Commissioner, as "the head of a conspiracy to do away with the rights of the people." Describing Milner's letter as a "blazing indiscretion," he proceeded to abuse him in what Dr. Smartt in a brief but deadly reply termed "an ill-judged, incorrect, savage, malignant, and ill-mannered attack."

If the Cape Colony were to be allowed to pass once more under the control of a Bond Ministry, Milner saw that it was more than ever incumbent upon him to devote his energies to the rapid development of the two new Colonies. In the Transvaal at least it might be possible, during the necessary period of Crown Colony Government, to build up a stronghold of British sentiment capable of influencing the whole. There, a growing population based upon the industrial expansion of the mining towns, might be reinforced by a British agricultural population, attracted by the scientific development of the great natural resources of the country.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. W. B. Worsfold.

24/10/02. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . I think we continue to be in complete agreement on the South African question. A great chance was lost when the Cape Parliament was allowed to reassemble in its present form, and much mischief has resulted. At the same time I am more than doubtful whether any good could be done by raising the question of Suspension again at the present moment. Those who advocated it when they did, have been completely justified, and there is no saying what we may see, or what action may be necessary hereafter in the Cape Colony. . . . The Cape will always remain the Achilles' heel of the British possessions in South Africa. Meanwhile, we must do all we can to push on the industrial and agricultural development of the Transvaal. This is becoming more and more the main string of our policy. . . .

CHAPTER XII

Chamberlain's Visit: Railway and Inter-Colonial Conferences

Chamberlain's Visit to South Africa

"THERE is nothing I wish more," Milner had written to the Colonial Secretary in June, "than that you could come to this country and see for yourself both its splendid opportunities, and its total lack of equipment" (Ch. X, p. 370). Chamberlain had formerly dismissed the project as impossible, but in September circumstances had changed.

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

4/9/02. . . . I am seriously contemplating an early visit to South Africa, and I want your frank opinion on the subject. . . . I think that the time has come, when, if a further [1] marked advance is to be made in the relations between the Mother-country and the Colonies, I must take some new step of a rather sensational kind, and accordingly, when Balfour became Prime Minister, I told him that I had it in my mind to make a visit to all the self-governing Colonies. . . . I propose to begin with South Africa. I am very anxious to see you and personally to discuss with you the very critical situation at which we have arrived. There are many questions of principle which might be settled between us in conversation, but which it is almost impossible to arrange by correspondence at long intervals. I should like to see for myself, and make the acquaintance of representative men of both parties and both races. . . .

Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

26/9/02. [SECRET AND PERSONAL] Only one opinion is possible. It would be the best thing that could happen for all of us, and I earnestly urge you to carry out your plan.

Milner, of course, welcomed the prospect of settling in conversa-

[1] After the Colonial Conference in London.

tion with his Chief some of the many important questions which called for immediate decision. In a long and elaborate memorandum,[1] which he drew up in December for Chamberlain's information, he enumerated some of the fundamental points which awaited determination, and which, for lack of it, were delaying progress. They were Compensation, the amount and distribution of the Loan, the War Contribution, and the Gold Law, the status of coloured persons and Asiatics, the position of Swaziland, the composition of the Legislative Council in the Transvaal, and Government action in reducing the cost of living.

The need of despatch was rendered all the more urgent, because ill-feeling was being fostered by the more irreconcilable section of the prisoners of war and predikants, who had recently been allowed to return.

"They are, of course," Milner wrote, "far too wise to signalize their return by any open attack upon the new order of things, especially in the presence of British people. But there are a hundred indirect ways, in which they are able to foment, and even to suggest, dissatisfaction with the Government among their British neighbours. A Nominee Government is never likely to be popular with a large and energetic community. But when that community is full of men animated by a deadly hostility to Great Britain, this unpopularity is always being fed in many insidious ways. The machinations of our political enemies in this respect are rendered much easier by the unconsciousness, born of an excessive sense of security, on the part of our friends. It is really amusing to see how this community, which, little more than three years ago, was in absolute servitude to the Boers, and which, if left to itself, would, within even a shorter period, be in the same servitude again, is totally unaware of the existence of any such danger, and is prepared to applaud anyone who comes along and raises a cry for Representative Government, without thinking what it would lead to. I do not think that the feeling in favour of Representative Government is really strong among the majority of men, but it is the fashion to express a desire for it, and nobody has the moral courage to run counter to that opinion. Those who see the danger, comfort themselves by the thought that the Imperial Government will take care not to grant it, and that being so they are content to gain a little popularity by joining the general cry.

[1] Presented to the Colonial Secretary at Maritzburg, before entering the Transvaal (Milner Papers, XLVI, i, 21–39).

(*Duffus Bros.*)

JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN IN JOHANNESBURG.
Lord Milner is seated between Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlain.

My own view is, that it is inevitable that a Crown Government should be unpopular in a community like this, and that its accumulated unpopularity must ultimately lead to a change. The whole question is, at what pace the unpopularity accumulates? If it grew sufficiently slowly to tide the country over the next three or four years, a point may have been reached when popular institutions may be granted with safety. It is therefore of supreme importance, not indeed to make Crown Government popular, which is impossible, but to make its unpopularity grow as slowly as possible, or, in other words, not to use up faster than necessary the influence, which is still considerable, of its principal agents. Obviously the best, and only means of compassing this end, as well as of promoting that influx of British population, which is the only ultimate safeguard of our position in South Africa, is to go ahead as hard as possible, drums beating and colours flying, with the development of the country and its resources, and with the work of building up an administration so competent and so imposing as to enforce an unwilling respect—a system which self-government, when it comes, is not likely altogether to destroy. In many respects the Local Governments have it in their power to do this even now, and if there is failure, they will only have themselves to blame for it. But there are other and very important points, with regard to which their action is hampered, and hampered with very serious consequences, by the fact that they are waiting for decisions, which it is not in their own power to take. . . .

With regard to Compensation, Milner represented that the civil authorities were blocked by the dilatory methods of the Military Compensation Courts. A swift decision as to what damage the Army Boards intended to pay for, was as imperative as that they should pay quickly. For until those things were known, it was impossible for the civil authorities to distribute the funds at their command.

As to Asiatic immigration, the desire to restrict it was unanimous: "If we are not able," Milner wrote, "to meet their views in any way, it simply means that we shall throw the strongest possible weight into the scales in favour of that premature introduction of self-government, the very first result of which will be restrictive legislation against Asiatics. Personally, I am as much opposed to the ordinary Colonial view on this subject, as I am to that of the extreme advocates of the British Indian. I should be sorry and ashamed to see the policy of the new Government towards Coloured Persons and Asiatics characterized by the same arbitrariness and

even brutality as that of President Kruger. But I think a compromise is perfectly possible which, while ensuring a decent status both to the Coloured Person and the Indian, and as full protection of his rights as those of any other class of the community, will nevertheless neither give him equality with the white man, nor allow him to swamp the white man. My first effort, however, to arrive at such a compromise was not successful. The proposals as regards Asiatics, submitted by the Transvaal Government to the Colonial Office last May or June, were rejected, and, amidst the enormous pressure of other urgent questions, I have never had time to put the broken pieces together again in a more acceptable form. In the meanwhile the urgency of the matter has grown, as Asiatics, new and old, are pouring in, and the white population is getting very restive. Their restiveness is increased by the fact that the Cape Government has just passed a very stringent law which has received the approval of H.M. Government. I am not sure that, having regard to the views of the Home Parliament, it will be possible to arrive at any solution altogether satisfactory to the Colonists here, but, as in many other things, it will be better to settle the matter, even if the settlement is unpopular, than to let it drag on. We must take what we can get, and I am fully satisfied that, after you have had an opportunity of hearing the views of the people here on the subject, you will be anxious to go as far on the way of meeting these views as is compatible with home opinion.

SWAZILAND.[1] The condition of this country can only be described as one of pacific chaos. There is a Resident Commissioner and an adequate Police Force. Crimes of violence are stopped, and the Swazis, though grumbling about their subject condition, are not likely to rebel. But it is absolutely impossible to undertake anything in the country, or to disentangle the claims of innumerable concessionaires, until the question of the status of the country as a whole is settled. With our present uncertainty no progress is possible. For my part I am quite satisfied that the only thing to do is to cut the Gordian knot, and that the solution of simply annexing Swaziland to H.M. Dominions and incorporating it in the Transvaal is the only right one. I do not believe it would weaken our position in dealing with concessions. On the contrary, I think it would strengthen it. But whatever solution of the problem of the status of Swaziland may be adopted, it is necessary

[1] *v.* Vol. I, pp. 182 ff.

to have some solution. At present no mortal man can say *what Swaziland is*, and almost every question that crops up with reference to that country—and the questions are numerous—is insoluble in consequence of this initial difficulty. The position of the Government in the matter is a very unenviable one, for people having large legitimate interests in the country come to us for enlightenment as to their position and the future of the country, and it is neither pleasant nor politic to have to admit that we do not know where we are. So far I have fenced with the question, but this cannot be kept up very much longer. . . .

Cost of living, he indicated, could be reduced by developing means of communication and reducing rates of transport, by which everybody would be the richer ; for " what we have all got to learn in South Africa, Government and traders alike, is that 5 per cent profit on £1,000 is better worth having than 30 per cent on £100, and that by the desperate clinging to the 30 per cent, which prevents the £100 of trade growing into £1,000, we are cutting our own throats." . . .

The full story of Chamberlain's visit belongs rather to his biography than to the present work. He had intended it to be " a business tour and not for show." He wished to see all important people who wished to see him, and also to visit some typical country districts. But the enthusiastic welcome which greeted his arrival at Durban (Dec. 26), was only the first expression of an overwhelming demand to see and hear the great orator and statesman, " the missionary of Empire," as he phrased it. Compelled to punctuate his progress through South Africa by a series of speeches, he used the opportunity for preaching unity and reconciliation under the British flag, and the duty of sharing the burden, as well as the benefits, of the Empire.

" The Empire," he said at Maritzburg, " is based on the idea of community of sacrifice," and he was " gratified beyond measure " to be able to announce that the Natal Government had shown its appreciation of that fact by undertaking to pay £2,000,000 in compensation for their own losses. On the other hand, he made it perfectly plain in this and subsequent speeches that whilst a policy of reconciliation would be energetically and generously pursued, it did not imply immediate concession of self-government to the new Colonies. That would not be granted until the danger of handing over the direction of affairs to a reactionary majority was overpast.

On leaving Natal Chamberlain was met at Charlestown, on the

Transvaal border (Jan. 3), by the High Commissioner and Sir Arthur Lawley, who had ridden up Majuba Hill whilst awaiting his train. At Pretoria, in response to ex-burghers who made complaints about compensation, and to those residents who were eager for self-government, he appealed for a little patience, whilst he discussed these and other difficult questions with all classes on the spot. Then, at a banquet given in his honour by Lawley on the 6th, he expounded the policy of H.M. Government. It was a policy of union and conciliation, but conciliation was not to be interpreted as a sign of weakness, or the prelude to further demands. With reference to the demand for self-government, he stated once again that they desired to grant this as soon as possible. In the meantime, " you have confidence in Lord Milner. So have we." In regard to compensation, he had already agreed with Lord Milner on a scheme which recognized that " even an arbitrary settlement would be better than prolonged delay." This scheme involved the handing over by the War Office to the civil administration of a lump sum of £3,000,000 and the settlement of claims for military compensation. By the adoption of Milner's solution of that difficult problem, the compensation of those Boers who had proved loyal after surrendering during the war was thus ensured (*v.* Ch. X).

Apart from these pronouncements, Lawley's banquet was rendered historic by the presence and attitude of the Boer Generals. Only six months previously they had sailed for Europe, with the blessing of the Bond at Cape Town. On their arrival there, after conferring with Kruger, Fischer, Wolmarans and Leyds, they had vainly endeavoured to obtain from Chamberlain a far-reaching revision of the Treaty of Vereeniging. Chamberlain's refusal had been as firm in effect as it was conciliatory in tone. The impression of sincerity and goodwill which he then conveyed had, it was now seen, induced the Boer leaders to adopt a different attitude. They recognized that, whilst Chamberlain was ready by every possible personal effort to promote his ideal of South Africa as one of the free, united and prosperous communities of the British Empire, they, too, might wisely and legitimately work for the same end, without sacrificing the ambitions of the Dutch Afrikanders they championed. Smuts' vision of the " passing through the valley of the shadow of death to the glory of a nobler future " took on a new significance in the light of Chamberlain's and Milner's endeavours.[1]

[1] Ch. IX, p. 362.

With the political acumen of which their adviser Hofmeyr was the supreme exemplar, the Boer Generals had realized that in dealing with Chamberlain they must change their tactics from a frontal attack to a more subtle method of persuasion. The banquet gave them an opportunity to show him that they were anxious in every way to pay him personal civility. It also provided an occasion for demonstrating that they differentiated between him and Milner, and possibly of causing a divergence between them. Even on Chamberlain, these tactics told.

Not that there was no longer occasion for firmness and straight speaking. Chamberlain's warning that there would be no re-opening of the terms of Peace was not uncalled-for. Ever since the Convention of 1881, the Boers had shown that they regarded a Treaty merely as a step for further bargaining. So now, on January 8, a deputation of a hundred leading Boers, led by Smuts, waited on the Secretary of State, and in an address of welcome, raised once again the issue of an amnesty and all the other points which Chamberlain had negatived in London as involving "an entirely new agreement." Chamberlain spoke very plainly in reply, "The Treaty of Vereeniging," he said, "is the charter of the Boer nation. You have every right to call on us to fulfil this in the spirit and the letter. But it is a little too early to try now to go behind, or further than the terms thus concluded." But though his firmness was quite unmistakable, he maintained a reasonable and friendly tone, welcoming Smuts' declaration that "we must stand together in the work of resettlement and restoration." "The hope of South Africa," he concluded, "lies in closer intercourse between the new races. We British and you Dutch are not really separated either in interest or in character. . . . The characteristics which you have, we admire—patriotism, courage, tenacity, and willingness to make sacrifices for what you believe to be right and true. Well, these are the qualities which we desire to imitate, and which we believe we share. I believe that with consideration on both sides, with strict observance of agreements on both sides, with a readiness to give as well as to take, before many years are over, probably sooner than any of us can now anticipate, we shall be one free people under one flag."

"A most excellent and impressive speech," was Milner's comment; and when Chamberlain and he left the Raadzaal, the Deputation responded to Botha's call for a hearty round of cheers.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

3/1/03. . . . I do *so* agree with you about the Ancients. It was the absence of Hustle which was the divine thing about their lives, not at all outweighed by the want of all the comforts and conveniences which we enjoy. It is difficult to think of life without a sense of our more common comforts. But the chance of " possessing one's soul " in peace is more than the lot of them put together. And yet, I think, we might do more in that line than we do. But we shall have to change some accepted rules of conduct, and the idea that you must be perpetually driving away—that it is a sort of moral obligation upon all of us to be perpetually hunting one another and ourselves. Just think of Joe, who has already made 19 speeches (!) since leaving England. Poor dear, he said to me yesterday, rather fretfully, " I am not good at platitudes, and how can they expect me to make speeches with anything in them, before I have even had time to look round." *She* is perfectly wonderful, always looks pleased, always looks cool, is unfussed amid all the hubbub, and perfectly and evenly courteous to everybody. What a type of real breeding ! . . . that perfect exterior . . . is classical. . . .

Same to Same.

11/1/03. . . . So far things have gone very well. On the political side he is quite all right, as far as the new Colonies are concerned, could not be better. The meeting with the Boers the other day was the greatest possible success. He made an admirable speech—inflexible—and yet very courteous in manner. Of course—as I have said several times—that is the way to treat them. We must never conciliate by yielding points of substance, or *needlessly alienate* by disregarding points of form. We can never do much to win them, but I am sure we can do something by always respecting their personal dignity. . . . And it is the easier to be civil to them, as, with all their faults, their own manners are so wonderfully good. Their self-control and tenue are their strong points. I remark this more and more every day. Nothing could have exceeded their dignity at that meeting. And in all these " treks " I have never met with the vestige of incivility, and even in their roofless houses they have always done what little they could to receive me—not certainly from love of me but from respect for my position, which is in their bones and intimately connected with their own self-respect. How Joe will get on at the Cape, I am not so sure. His education is proceeding, and he is as staunch as even I could desire in showing our friends that we stick by them. But he is a little inclined to believe in smoothing

matters over and does not realize—how should he? what but years of the most intimate converse could enable him to realize?—that the well-meaning but good-natured, who talk of middle parties and moderation, and doing nothing to irritate race feeling, are, as they always have been, as I was during my first six months, and before enlightenment came to me, playing into the hands of the Dutch. . . .

18/1/03. . . . Jo'burg has quietly succeeded in enlightening Joe. He does not say much, but I can see, from things he constantly lets slip, that he is beginning to realize its potential greatness, and thoroughly British character. He will always think about it differently from what he has done, without being in the least aware that he has changed. I chuckle inwardly at this, but say nothing. Indeed, it amuses me occasionally to "draw" him by running the place down, and see him bridle, and begin, in his incisive way, to take up arms for it. He is a wonderfully vital sexagenarian. . . . I think that Mrs. C., who continues to behave like an absolute angel, and is adored by everybody, will do her best for L.W.G. (Loyal Women's Guild).

Chamberlain, as will have been seen from his letters, had from the first contemplated that part of the cost of the war should be paid as an indemnity by the South African Republic. But when the Republic had become a British Colony the situation changed. Not only would such a contribution have to be levied mainly upon the British members of the community, but, as Milner feared, it would deplete the reserve of wealth upon which he could draw for the development of the country. Still, public opinion in England demanded that some relief from the burden of taxation caused by the war should be contributed out of the wealth of the Transvaal. Chamberlain felt that this demand was just. But since the logic of events compelled him to drop the idea of an indemnity, he changed his tactics. Not those who had provoked the war, but those on whose behalf it had been fought, and who must be presumed to have benefited by it, must now be asked to pay part of its cost. For it was politically important that he should not return empty-handed.

Milner, as he had shown in his letters and conversations in London, whilst admitting the equity of the claim, was chiefly anxious that the payment of such contribution should be spread over a long period, and in such a way as not to paralyse the financing of development. In words that showed that Milner's representations had not fallen on deaf ears, Chamberlain declared at the banquet

on January 7, that His Majesty's Government had no intention of doing anything which would hamper the development of the Colony. Nor did they want a grudging concession. He would rather return empty-handed than with an arrangement extorted from an unwilling people. He then held a series of interviews with the leading men of the Rand, and obtained from them a promise to raise a separate loan of £30,000,000, as a contribution to the Imperial Government towards the cost of the war. It was never raised. The expected prosperity of the gold mines was delayed by shortage of labour and financial depression; whilst the protest against taxation without representation, made by the Boer leaders and those who were pressing for self-government, was recognized by the dropping of the claim when self-government was granted. Though the amount now promised was much less than Chamberlain had hoped for, or Milner had agreed to be reasonable, Milner subsequently came to the conclusion that the figure had been put too high, and made in 1905 suggestions to the Secretary of State for reducing it :—

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

27/5/05. . . . The danger of a violent clash between the demands of the new Colonies for money for their own development and the demands of the Treasury for some of the War Contributions, has become imminent. . . . The one thing which . . . it was essential to avoid, was the *appearance of starving any necessary public works on account of the war contribution.* . . . There are two things wrong about the Contribution—mind you, I am *particeps criminis*, and don't try to excuse myself; I had always much rather admit a mistake than persist in it. One is the *Amount* (too much); the other, the plan of instalments, which keeps it hanging over the head of the Colony, and a possible source of quarrel between the Colony and the Mother Country for an indefinite time. Both evils could be cured at a blow, if we were to take the bull by the horns, and say we should be satisfied with a lower amount but that it must be settled once and for all. . . . If you ask me what I think really that the Transvaal *can* pay, without seriously impeding its own development and that of the sister-Colony, my answer is : Fifteen Millions, if the wasteful and ridiculous form of contribution, which at present holds the field, is persisted in : Twenty Millions, if a more sensible form is adopted. But whatever it is, let it be settled once for all, so that the Colony can have the encouragement of feeling that future increases of Revenue will accrue to its own benefit. As to the form of contribution, what I mean is this :

Why compel the Transvaal to borrow at all for this purpose? Why make a fresh appeal to the Money Market, which has had a surfeit of Transvaal and other Colonial loans, and at the same time give the relief to the British taxpayer in the manner most burdensome to the Colony? The original plan was that the Transvaal should raise *x* millions to hand over to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and raise them, of course, without an Imperial Guarantee. Now that means borrowing, *at best*, at 3½ per cent. What will the Chancellor of the Exchequer do with the money? Pay off a debt, which cost him say 2¾, or, at worst, 3 per cent. But to borrow at 3½ in order to pay off a debt bearing 2¾ or 3 is surely foolish. Why *compel* the Transvaal taxpayer to bear a burden greater than the relief afforded to the British taxpayer? Would it not be far better to convert a certain amount of British Debt, say 20 millions, into a terminable annuity and let the Transvaal pay that annuity? . . .

For a fortnight between January 8 and 22, whilst Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlain were his guests at "Sunnyside," Milner had a series of conversations with the Secretary of State. They covered the whole field of the High Commissioner's activities and proposals for the future. Milner stated his views. Chamberlain with characteristic clarity of vision came to vigorous conclusions upon them. Memoranda of their conversations, and of the highly important decisions then reached, are preserved in the Milner Papers (XLVI, i). They fill many pages. Besides those pressing matters which Milner had enumerated (p. 428), they discussed the Ethiopian movement; the South African Garrison; countervailing duties on German bounty-fed sugar; the South African Constabulary; Milner's programme of railway construction and pooling of receipts as between the two new Colonies; the position of the Crown Agents; the creation of a Forestry Department; the taxation of Dynamite and the Possession of Arms Act; the immigration of women; and the purchase of the Hatherley Distillery.

Chamberlain withdrew his objection to Milner's residence at Johannesburg (*v.* Ch. VIII). But the choice of Pretoria as the capital had been practically decided by Sir Arthur Lawley's residence there.

Milner agreed, though with reluctance, that Messrs. Fischer, Wolmarans and Wessels should be allowed to return from Europe. It was further decided that a law should be passed providing for elective municipalities in towns, and that an Inter-Colonial Conference, "including, if the Colonies agreed, representatives from

the Portuguese possessions, should be held in March to consider the question of a Customs Union and the New Tariff, and also to consider Native administration and legislation in regard to aliens." Milner undertook to raise the question of Preferential trade at the Conference, suggesting a preference of 25 per cent in favour of the products of the British Empire.

The shortage of labour in Rhodesia occasioned an interesting Minute (20/1/03): "Lord Milner would be inclined to favour an experiment in the importation of Chinese labour, and says the authorities have power under their local legislation to make it.[1] I [*Chamberlain*] consider that such action would be extremely unpopular, and would raise a storm at home, and that such a step could not be safely taken unless the Transvaal were previously or at the same time to adopt a similar course. Even if the experiment were not formally prohibited, the Government would certainly give no assistance in Chinese ports, and it would be difficult to obtain labour without it. The feeling at present all over South Africa is against such a policy, and as long as this continues, it is not likely that the Home Government would give its assent."

Milner's representations on the position of Swaziland (p. 430), resulted in an Order in Council, June, 1903, by which administrative authority was granted to the Governor of the Transvaal, with power to appoint Commissioners and to legislate by proclamation. But, since H.M. Government still hesitated between annexing Swaziland to the Transvaal, as Milner thought best, or constituting it a separate Protectorate, he was inhibited from using this power. In the following January he again pressed for permission to regularize the position in Swaziland, pointing out that it was profoundly unsatisfactory that the authority of the officials and police, which alone prevented the country from relapsing into complete barbarism, should continue to be devoid of legal foundation.[2] The necessary permission having been granted, Milner in October, 1904, after much consultation with Sir Richard Solomon and the Colonial Office, appointed an administration, and put into force such laws of the Transvaal as were applicable in Swaziland. He also appointed a Commission to inquire into the many overlapping

[1] Under a Rhodesian Ordinance, sanctioned by the Colonial Office, for the temporary importation of indentured labour, Arabs had been imported in 1901, but proved unsatisfactory. Leave to import Chinese required the further assent of the Colonial Office.

[2] Milner Papers, XLVI, i.

concessions with which the country had been saddled, with a view to their expropriation.

The conversations thus begun at Johannesburg were resumed at Bloemfontein, whither Milner had accompanied the Chamberlains on January 22, rejoining them there on their return (Feb. 3) from visits to Mafeking and Kimberley. Milner was accompanied on this occasion by his old friend, (Sir) Henry Birchenough, then engaged in preparing, as Special Commissioner appointed by the Board of Trade, his notable report upon the position and prospects of South African trade. "Birchenough," Milner wrote to a friend, "has left, which is a great loss to me. He is a dear, companionable creature and so extraordinarily clever, it is a constant marvel to me that he does not fill a bigger place in the world. But he is the most unpushing and most unselfish man, and has always spent himself for other people." . . .

Of Sir Henry Birchenough's Report (Cd. 1844) Milner wrote as follows :

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

12/9/04. . . . It is one of the most thorough pieces of work of the kind I have ever seen, and is not only a store-house of information of the greatest value to South Africa, but a model of what such Reports ought to be. . . .

The Minutes of Milner's talks with Chamberlain record, among other matters discussed, detailed proposals for revising the whole of the Intelligence Department, and his request for a Botanist to suggest and supervise the introduction of new grasses.

And now were decided those great financial and administrative measures, upon which Milner based the fabric of his whole plan for the future. The road to those decisions had been fully prepared by his masterly financial and land settlement despatches during the preceding years (Ch. X). He had asked for a guaranteed loan of £38,000,000. This was reduced to £35,000,000, to be raised by the two Colonies under Imperial guarantee, and to cover their liabilities and requirements for development. Out of this loan, five millions were allotted to railway construction, and three to the purchase of suitable land for settlers. A contingent liability of five millions, as a contribution to the expenses of the war, was laid on the Orange River Colony, in the event of new sources of revenue arising from mineral discoveries.

The Town Police of that Colony was to be amalgamated with

the South African Constabulary, the establishment of which, as a defence force common to the two Colonies, was to be defrayed out of a common fund. That fund, so Milner had planned it, was to be provided by treating all government railways of both Colonies as common property and pooling their receipts.[1] As matters stood, the Orange River Colony was taxing the Transvaal heavily in the form of railway rates. The extension of the railways on sound economic principles was thereby rendered difficult. Amalgamation would render possible the highly desirable lowering of rates, and would not only avoid conflict of interests between the two Colonies, but also be a step towards their union in anticipation of the ultimate Federation of South Africa.[2]

The creation of these common interests involved, in Milner's scheme, another step towards unification by the institution of an Inter-colonial Council.[3] For the first duties of that body, inaugurated by Order in Council in May,[4] were to advise the High Commissioner on the financial administration of the Railways and the South African Constabulary, as well as the apportionment of the loan in accordance, not with the respective wealth of the two Colonies, but with the work that could be done in them.

Thus, by means of the loan and with the help of a common Council, the abundant wealth of the Rand might be applied to the equal development of the whole conquered territory. From the political point of view, Milner hoped that the Inter-colonial Council would prove a training ground for South African statesmen, and accustom the public men of each Colony to broader views than those of merely parochial interest. "To open a wider political horizon, to create a South African habit of mind, as distinct from a colonial one, was ever Milner's guiding thought, and in this new body he saw an effective instrument towards his purpose. . . . The Inter-colonial Council was one of Milner's most original and fruitful conceptions." So wrote Milner's most competent interpreter, Mr. Amery.[5]

[1] The control of them as one system—the Central South African Railways—under the authority of the High Commissioner, had been confirmed by Order in Council in the preceding September.

[2] Milner Papers, XLVI, i, 46.

[3] The Inter-colonial Council consisted at first of fourteen officials and nominated members, with two elected by the non-official members of each Legislative Council. Their number was raised the following year (21/4/04) to twenty-six, when the unofficial members were increased to twelve.

[4] *v.* Cd. 1641. [5] "*The Times* History of the War in South Africa," VI, 8.

Some of the decisions thus made during days which Milner notes as " busy and eventful " (*Diary*), were announced by Chamberlain at banquets at Johannesburg (Jan. 17), and at Bloemfontein (Feb. 7); at the latter Milner announced the amalgamation of the railways and the institution of the Inter-colonial Council. The note in Milner's *Diary* describes Chamberlain's speech on this occasion as " one of the most successful speeches he has made," and adds, " We got home before 12, but sat up for some time talking. Mr. Chamberlain was interesting on the subject of oratory." Those who remember the bracing effect and lambent lucidity of Chamberlain's speeches may well wish that Milner had found time to record something of what was said on this occasion.

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Lord Onslow, Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies.

16/2/03. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . I have the honour to enclose a copy of a Memorandum which I prepared for Mr. Chamberlain's consideration. . . . I have his authority to say that he is in general accord with my proposals. . . . To carry out the scheme outlined in Part II, viz. the pooling of the Railway receipts of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colonies, and making these receipts the basis of a Common Fund for the Two Colonies, a new Order in Council will be required. . . . The more I consider the matter, the more important does it appear to me, both economically and politically, to adopt, as soon as possible, the scheme of a Common Budget of the two Colonies for certain common purposes. The mere complications of accounts, which will arise in connection with the Guaranteed Loan under the present system, will be productive of great waste of time and labour. The division of the Railway Accounts is already a serious matter, and is of absolutely no use except for the purpose of separating the interests of the two Colonies, which separation, with all the accounting, can never be satisfactorily effected. But much more serious is the political friction and the tendency of the two new Colonies to fly apart, which will certainly result under present conditions, unless there is something more than the personality of a common Governor to keep them together. The proposal I make is based on the principle of leaving both Colonies to develop freely on their own lines in all matters in which individuality can possibly be of advantage, but to unite them in these matters of common interest, in which separate development could only be mischievous and where unity of administration is essential to economy and strength. I consider this is the most important

proposal both in its immediate effects and probable consequences of any that I have ever had the honour to put before you since I have occupied my present position.

In a subsequent memorandum, Milner gave an estimate of the revenue the Inter-colonial Council would have to dispose of, and explained at length the reasons for an immediate Order in Council, which was telegraphed in May.

When Chamberlain left Bloemfontein for the Cape, Milner returned to Johannesburg to discuss the Customs Union tariff and other matters with Sir Albert Hime. So far, Chamberlain's visit had proved a brilliant and beneficent success. But there, in Milner's opinion, the success ended. He had foreseen the danger that he would be beguiled by the blandishments of the Bond.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

9/2/03. . . . The Chamberlains have left, after a triumphant procession through both the new Colonies. They reach the Cape to-night, where may good angels protect them from being beguiled. . . . They will need the whole Heavenly Host ! . . .

15/2/03. . . . You can imagine my feelings, if Joe does forgive and bless the Bond, before he leaves South Africa. You may be kindly to the Dutch, even the rebels, if you will. But to have any "truck" with the fundamentally and incurably disloyal organization which has caused all the mischief, and is as full of devilry as it ever was, would be an even greater blunder than the suspension mess. It is a blunder *even to receive a Bond* deputation. As many Dutchmen as you please, but *not as Bondsmen*. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Abrahamson.

10/2/03. [PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL] . . . Mr. Chamberlain has just left us. His visit to the two new Colonies has been an unmitigated success. There are reasons for which I am more anxious about his visit to the Cape Colony. For one thing he will, of necessity, be constantly surrounded by men who, for their own reputation, are bound to try and mislead him. They may do this unconsciously. . . . Don't let people be afraid of Mr. Chamberlain. He has a lightning-like intelligence, and it is useless trying to deceive him. But he is *most patient* and courteous, and will spend any amount of time to get at the truth. Sincerity, simplicity and a command of facts, not generalities, will win him at any time. His disposition is absolutely right. You must see to it that he gets *the facts*. . . .

Chamberlain, however, probably had it already in his mind to

make a bargain with "Onze Jan," with whom he had several interviews. He received public and private assurances from the leaders of the Bond that, in response to the appeal in his speeches, they were willing to work for the common good as loyal members of the British Empire. A speech to that effect by Mr. N. R. de Waal, Secretary of the Bond, on February 14, was followed by a statement by Hofmeyr (Feb. 21), in which he promised that a circular would immediately be issued to the Dutch-speaking inhabitants, urging them to cease from insulting and boycotting loyalists. Such assurances, Chamberlain declared, must be received in the spirit in which he believed they were made. Hofmeyr's statement he accepted as "a most hopeful and most happy augury for the future."

His acceptance of the Bond's professions was probably not so lamb-like as Milner supposed. He thought it better tactics, as he explained to Mr. E. B. Iwan Müller,[1] to pin the Bond leaders down to their professions. He could then repudiate them with all the more force, should they play false. In the meantime he still refused to suspend the Constitution. After failing, as Milner had known that he would fail, in an attempt to solve the constitutional difficulty (*v.* Ch. XI), by the formation of a Coalition Ministry, Chamberlain obtained assurances from Sprigg that no contentious measures, and specifically no measure for re-enfranchising the rebels, should be introduced in the existing Parliament; and that the new Parliament, after an election had been held as soon as the new register was completed, should be summoned to meet at the earliest possible moment. Thus he protected the Progressives from the danger lest Sprigg should pass contentious measures at the bidding of the Bond, in an admittedly unrepresentative Parliament, or that he should afterwards prolong his tenure of office by delaying the meeting of the new Parliament.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

31/5/03. . . . We shall know, long before this reaches you, what Sprigg intends to do. I never supposed that he would himself introduce contentious measures. But, if he wants to break his pledges, it is quite easy for him to let his Bond friends introduce them, and then pretend that he cannot help himself, and find reasons for assenting. The Bond seems divided as to the policy of proposing to re-enfranchise rebels. My opinion remains as firm as possible, that it would be a great disaster if we allowed

[1] Milner Papers, XXXIX, ii, 124.

such a measure to become law. It not only means handing over the Cape to Bond Government for five years, but it will discourage all our real friends, and take the heart out of all resistance to the Nationalist propaganda. I am perfectly satisfied that, whatever Hofmeyr's personal view may be, the bulk of his followers are just what they always were, only more embittered. They will keep the sheep's clothing on, to the best of their ability, for the present, because they *must have* some " mugwump " support, if they are to win the next election. But once firmly seated in the saddle, they will show their true colours. I know you do not quite share my views on this point, and I can only, with all respect, put on record my unshaken conviction, that the " South African Party " [1] has no other object or meaning than to weaken, in the hope of ultimately dissolving, the tie which unites South Africa with Great Britain. . . .

In the end, the fears which Milner shared with the Progressives were not immediately realized. But that does not imply that they had been groundless. Milner's open advocacy of Suspension, and Chamberlain's plain warning that he would resort to it, if obliged, had a restraining influence upon the Bond, and gave renewed vigour to the Progressive party, which was further roused by the contemplated re-enfranchisement of the rebels. When the elections were held at the beginning of 1904, the Progressives swept Sprigg and the Bond from power, and with Dr. (Sir Starr) Jameson as Prime Minister, steered the Colony through the critical years till the Union.

Extract from Telegram. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

25/2/03. Thanks and good-bye. I wish you renewed health and strength to carry on your great work. . . .

In a speech to the Town Council of Johannesburg (Jan. 8), Chamberlain had referred to Milner's services in significant terms. " I have come here," he said, " in the hope that I may be able to strengthen the hands of Lord Milner in the gigantic task to which, during the last few years, he has devoted such conspicuous ability and patriotism. I hope—I know that here I shall appreciate the magnitude of the work that he has already done. I see how you trust him. And I hope that when I go back I shall be better able to co-operate with him in the work which he is carrying on."

[1] The title then recently adopted by the Bond, as opposed to the Progressive, party.

And again at Bloemfontein he had said that he was disposed "to envy Lord Milner whose privilege and destiny, he hoped and believed, it was to stay many years amongst them, and to witness the full fruition of his great policy." In his farewell speech at Cape Town he made further reference to Milner's work in the two new Colonies, a reference which was received "with tremendous applause." "If the firm and sympathetic policy of Lord Milner," he said, "is continued, the two new Colonies will be amongst the most prosperous and the most contented of the dominions of the Crown. I know there are people who talk of Lord Milner, whom perhaps they have never seen, and with whom I am sure they are not personally acquainted, as if he were a hard man, inclined always to arbitrary and even tyrannical methods. There can be no greater travesty of the truth than that: and if these people had seen him, as I have had the privilege of seeing him, at work; if they could have seen his patient and personal attention to every grievance that was brought to his knowledge, his devotion to the details of every branch of his administration, his constant endeavour to find new methods of benefiting every class of the population, his earnest desire to help the needs of those who are in trouble, to restore those who have suffered during the war to their old prosperity —I say if they could have seen this, they would themselves have been the first to be ashamed of their suspicions."

These announcements that the High Commissioner would continue in office were, in fact, the outcome of long discussion between them. Rumour had been rife in January that Milner intended to retire. He was to be Governor-General of Canada, it was said; or he was to succeed Curzon as Viceroy of India. Representations from all sides—a deputation from the Cape, headed by Mr. Wilmot, and a speech by Mr. J. G. Fraser at Bloemfontein (Feb. 7), urged upon Chamberlain the opinion of all thinking men that it would be a calamity if his labours for the resettlement of the country were interrupted. These rumours were authoritatively denied (Feb. 2), and on Feb. 10 Chamberlain at Grahamstown assured his listeners that Milner would remain. Yet there was some truth in them. Milner was anxious to retire. He yielded only to Chamberlain's earnest representation that it was his duty to remain in South Africa and steer the ship of state into port, after the stormy voyage through which he had piloted her. In the end a bargain had been struck.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

20/1/03. . . . Would you agree to this compromise on the subject of my stay here? (1) That I take leave this year at any time which, subject to public exigencies, may suit my private convenience. I think you will readily agree that this should be on full pay. (2) That I return for *one* year. In fixing that date, I do not exclude the possibility of my remaining longer, should it appear on public grounds absolutely necessary. But the *presumption* should be that my period of service closed then. (3) That I should be allowed to retain my present residence. I have not by any means dwelt, in our conversation, on all the personal reasons I have for wishing to retire. I must ask you to take it from me that they are strong, and that I am going a long way to meet your wishes, in the teeth of every personal consideration and inclination. Under these circumstances, I hope you will regard the above as a reasonable offer. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Chamberlain to Lord Milner.

21/1/03. . . . I thank you for your letter of yesterday and appreciate your public spirit in consenting to prolong your services here. I agree to your proposals. . . .

Apart from the difference with his Chief over the question of suspending the Constitution of the Cape Colony, Milner's wish to retire was traceable to his increasing dissatisfaction with the effect of the party system upon Imperial policy.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

25/3/03. . . . All the interferences from home are bad. I resist as long as I can. When resistance is hopeless, I give way on minor points. I am prepared to make small mistakes to please them. No man can expect to have all his own way. But I will not be their agent for big mistakes. If they are set on such, they must find another agent. It is not very likely that they will press me for these. Joe, as dictator, never would, and he is very strong. But Joe may, under certain circumstances, give way to the pressure of parliamentary necessities, of Party, of a rotten public opinion. . . . But the system is wrong. . . . I set sail in a rotten ship. By the help of the High Gods I may get her into port somehow. Clearly it is my duty to do all I can to that end, not to leave her (unless the rudder is taken out of my hands) till she is in port. But I am under no obligation to take another voyage in her. The day might come—who knows?—when I should have the opportunity of pointing out, *why* we make such a mess of things, and

make the burden on the true-hearted servants of the country so unnecessarily heavy; *where* the system is wrong. But I should not attempt that for a long time, not till I could see my own experiences at a true perspective, till personal bitterness had died out of me, as it readily does, with rest and time, and I could speak of it all coolly, with balance, with calm and therefore carrying a conviction, which I could not carry while still heated from the fray and when people might think that anger, disappointment or some personal interest clouded my judgment. From a calm distance, as a man out of the fray for ever, with nothing to gain or lose, I think I might, if I lived and things so shaped themselves, make my *experience* of use to future labourers.

24/4/03. . . . Robinson, who has been working with me as an extra Secretary, for the last year, takes Walrond's place. . . . So, as far as that goes, I have fallen on my feet. . . . The worst of it all is, I feel increasingly: *For what* is this sacrifice of life? We have got as good raw material of statesmen as any country ever had. But the system is hopeless. Only one man in a hundred dares give effect or utterance to the statesmanship that is in him, and he, being a solitary incident, is of little use. He may, like Cromer, develop one limb of the body, but of a body paralysed at the centre. It is no use abusing the Ministry. The Ministry has weak members, but it has also very strong ones. As a whole they are a failure. So will their successors be, because there is no consistent national mind about any political question, no *standard*, no cohesion, system, training anywhere. Even the few people who think consistently or constantly about public affairs, and think of them as a whole, such as Leo (Maxse), Spenser Wilkinson, Amery, your humble servant, are all "on their own" without touch, without being a school, without co-related effort towards agreed common ends, and if we were all in touch we should avail nothing. Perhaps a great *Charlatan*—political scallywag, buffoon, liar, stump orator and in other respects popular favourite—may some day arise, who is nevertheless a *statesman*—the combination is not impossible—and who, having attained and maintaining power by popular art, may use it for national ends. It is an off chance, but I don't see any other. I don't deceive myself. If I am making sacrifices, it is not for this effete and dislocated Body Politic. The Almighty, if he wishes to preserve it, will do so, not assuredly from within, but from without, i.e. by smiting all its competitors (as some of them are already smitten) with similar fatuity. . . .

16/5/03. . . . That is what I say 1,000 times and shall die saying. *It is not the fault of the men.* Lansdowne is a *good average* man. Joe is an extraordinary man—quite absolutely on the big

lines. Under a different system, he really might federate the Empire effectively and live in history with the Richelieus. He has most comical weaknesses,—look at his impressionability. The most ridiculous incidents—and people—temporarily affect him, and may cause him to make great mistakes. But the effect is only temporary. In the long run he is swayed by big permanent ideas, and they are not external to him, but, wherever he gets them from, *they have roots inside him*, which alone can ensure any vitality to a policy or any greatness to its possessor. Still, even Joe can make nothing great with this *system*, and what do you expect of lesser men? . . .

You may say what *is* the *system* you are always abusing? Well, it is not easy to analyse, all in a hurry, but here are some of its defects. (1) Ultimate power in all matters, without appeal, with an ignorant people, not only ignorant but having no adequate appreciation of the supreme value of trained knowledge, or of the differences in the *size* of the questions submitted to them, so that they are capable of the same levity with regard to the biggest things as with regard to trifles. (2) This disregard or rather inadequate regard for trained knowledge and complete information running through the whole people, not merely the groundlings, and finding its expression in the habit of mind and judgment of the upper class and the whole structure of our administration. (3) Party Politics at their worst, i.e. the old divisions of parties no longer corresponding to any real differences, and representing the mere husks of dead controversies,—hence a pure struggle of ins and outs without any inner meaning, or principle in it whatever. (4) A huge unwieldy Cabinet, in which half-a-dozen men of Cabinet rank are swamped by twice the number of second-rate men, who are mere ballast. At ordinary times this does not matter, but in a storm shifting ballast may sink a ship. The inert stupid mass wobbles over in a crisis, and you have a disaster. Or rather, to use your simile, the ruck of the mules stampede, and carry the stronger animals with them, or trample on them in their wild flight. (5) Above and Before All. No grading of the 100,000 questions, no separating of the local and Imperial, the great and the small, but all ultimately centring in that same unwieldy Cabinet, which, muddling a pension or a "row in the Guards," may be shaken in its dealing with a national question of the first moment, and in any case cannot give *continuous thought and study* to the *vital*, being eternally distracted by the local and *temporary*, even when not by the absolutely *petty and parish pump*, order of questions. This side of the muddle needs a small volume to develop. . . . I never, even to myself, criticize Joe without hastily adding "but it is not his fault." One is so

grateful for greatness anywhere. It is a sort of *lèse majesté* of the worst description to undermine it. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Spenser Wilkinson.

27/4/03. . . . The South African struggle continues. It has changed its character; it is no longer war with bullets, but it is war still. Chamberlain's speeches, excellent as they are in many respects, and perhaps useful for the moment for the public, (I do not wish anything I say to be taken as disparagement of him, for whom, in spite of differences, I have the highest possible respect), Chamberlain's speeches, I say, are calculated to obscure this fact, and to encourage an optimism which is not justified. . . . It is quite true that we now hold the winning cards, but it is not true that we have won the game, and we cannot afford to lose a single trick. . . . We are fighting for something immensely big. "The Lion and the Unicorn were fighting for the Crown," the Crown, mind you, and nothing less important. . . . Of all the distant portions of the British Empire, this may become by far the most valuable, by which I mean not necessarily the richest or the most populous, but the one affording the most support to Great Britain. . . . We may lose South Africa yet. But if we keep it, we shall have kept it by developing here a spirit of wider British patriotism. . . . The mere fact, that the British race and the Pan-Britannic idea have only survived here after a desperate struggle and are still engaged in that struggle, less fierce indeed but quite ceaseless, have made our people in South Africa more British in sentiment and stronger Imperialists than almost any other section of our Nation, whether in the Colonies or at home. Of course, we can only maintain South Africa at all by maintaining this strength of British sentiment and by increasing the numbers of British people . . .

Railway Extension and the Inter-colonial Council

The immediate practical result of Chamberlain's visit was that Milner, fortified by his decisions, and assured of his support and understanding, was able to proceed forthwith with his schemes "with drums beating and colours flying." A great deal of correspondence passed between the High Commissioner concerning the composition of the new Councils and Commissions. It would, of course, be wearisome to print it, or innumerable other letters dealing with administrative details. Yet only by reading them, perhaps, can a just idea be obtained of the watchful guard Milner kept over the interests of the settlers, the intimacy of his supervision

over political, financial and administrative developments, and the fertility of resource he displayed in devising expedients in circumstances wholly new.

Within a week of Chamberlain's departure a Railway Extension Conference held its first meeting at Johannesburg (March 3). Milner presided. Although he had only recently risen from a bed of sickness,[1] his opening address showed no lack of grasp or vigour. All the railways, he announced, in placing before the Conference the schemes which he had worked out with Sir Percy Girouard, were now the common property of all the inhabitants. "What I would beg of you to realize is that, if you are a citizen of the Orange River Colony, you have, in that character, just as much interest in the Pretoria–Pietersburg Railway as a citizen of the Transvaal, and, conversely, that a citizen of the Transvaal has henceforward just as much interest in the Thaba-'Nchu–Bloemfontein Railway as if he were a citizen of the Orange River Colony. . . . We have £5,000,000 to spend between the Orange River and the Limpopo. The question is, how best to spend it? What lines are really needed most? Which will pay best, both directly in yielding revenue and indirectly in developing the resources of the country? The sum is large in itself, but it is small compared with our wants. These Colonies, starved as they have been in everything making for material development, with the sole exception of the capital invested in the mines, have been starved in no respect so strikingly, so detrimentally, as in the matter of railways. . . . The £5,000,000 will not by any means give us all that we urgently require. All the more important is it, therefore, to make sure that it will be devoted to the things most needed. . . ."

The members of the Conference responded nobly to Milner's appeal. Taking a broad and business-like view of the problem, they drew up a programme of construction which formed the opening chapter of a new railway history of South Africa. Very ably assisted by the members of the Railway Committee, Milner applied his great financial and administrative ability and foresight to extricating the existing system from chaos, and developing it with an eye to the benefit not only of the two Colonies, but also of South Africa as a whole. Before he retired, the Central South African Railways were in a position to pay the whole cost of the Guaranteed Loan. But Milner did not regard railway expansion

[1] Feb. 21–March 1. During his illness he read William James's "The Varieties of Religious Experiences."

merely as a dividend-paying proposition. He urged it as a means of developing the country, and bringing the farms into touch with the towns ; as a means of lowering the cost of living by reduction of rates ; and as a step towards more extensive amalgamation leading on to Federation. This vitally important chapter in the development of South Africa is too long and intricate to be retold here. Fortunately it is easily accessible elsewhere.[1]

A week after the first meeting of the Railway Extension Conference, a Customs Union Convention was held at Bloemfontein (March 10).[2] For half his life Cecil Rhodes had been striving for railway and customs unions. Now, at last, after nearly breaking down over the question of railway rates, the Conference succeeded in framing a tariff to which all the British Colonies and Protectorates in South Africa agreed. Not only were all internal tariff barriers abolished, but the new Customs tariff also granted an Imperial Preference to Great Britain, and such other British possessions as would concede reciprocal treatment. The preference amounted to 25 per cent in most cases, and total remission of the duty in others (March 23).

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

27/3/03. [SECRET AND PERSONAL] I am rather alarmed at the apparent complete indifference at home at the proposed adoption by South Africa of preference on British goods. Our difficulty was the Cape, which feared German reprisals against its large wool export to Germany. Now our telegrams from Europe speak only of dissatisfaction and threats in Germany. England seems absolutely indifferent. This may be because details of Conference cannot be published and people doubt whether measure will be passed. My belief is that it will not pass in the Cape House [3] unless between this and then Cape Colonists have reason to think that the Mother Country really cares about it. It is, I know, too much to expect that the latter should protect her Colonies against

[1] The full story of the proceedings of the Railway Conference and the Inter-colonial Council on railway administration and finance, together with Milner's addresses and despatches, is set out in the Blue Books, Cd. 1552, 2104, and the Hon. R. H. Brand's Report (1906), Cd. 3528. Milner Papers, L. See also Worsfold, W. B., " Reconstruction of the New Colonies," II, Ch. XV ; Bleloch, W., " The New South Africa," Ch. XVII.

[2] For proceedings and Milner's despatches, see Cd. 1599, 1640 ; Milner Papers, XXVIII, ii.

[3] In the end, thanks to the support of Mr. Hofmeyr, the Customs Union was approved by the Cape Parliament.

being punished by foreign nations for going out of the way to do Great Britain a good turn. But they do expect some decided mark of appreciation. Any reciprocal advantage, however small, or even the hope of it some day, would encourage the sentiment here, which is very strong, but will not live permanently on nothing. At present there are no South African exports to Great Britain which are taxed; therefore, reciprocity is impossible. But I believe it would be quite sufficient if something, however slight, was done for Canada. This would recognize the principle of reciprocity and South Africa might hope to benefit from that some day. But it is not really the small and hypothetical mercantile advantages which anybody worries about, but proof that England cares.

But before Chamberlain reached England, he learned that the Free Traders in the Cabinet had forced the repeal of the duty on corn imposed during the war. Milner was disgusted, for on the understanding that it was intended to use the corn tax to give preferential treatment to Canada, he had used his personal influence to carry the preferential tariff at a moment otherwise locally inconvenient.[1] Chamberlain a few weeks later retired from office and entered upon his great campaign for Tariff Reform.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir A. Hime.

25/4/03. [VERY CONFIDENTIAL] . . . I am badly knocked by the British Budget. . . . The remission of the Corn Duty, instead of giving a preference to Canada, is a sad loss of an opportunity. Between ourselves, Chamberlain told me most distinctly that the Cabinet *had agreed* on the latter course. I suppose their recent defeats [2] have demoralized them and made them go back on it. This is the more disappointing, as I had hoped our Bloemfontein decision would have strengthened their hands. . . .

The Conference concluded its labours with a unanimous resolution "hailing with thankfulness the great stride that had been made towards political unification, and looking forward to the not distant day of union under one central administration." To prepare the way to that desired end, it recommended the constitution of an Inter-colonial Commission, with a Chairman appointed by the High Commissioner, to gather information and make recommendations to the several Governments, "with the object of arriving at a common understanding on questions of native policy."

[1] On March 10, "the meetings had been rather stormy, owing to hot debate on the question of preferential trade" (*Diary*).

[2] In two by-elections.

The desirability of applying a uniform and humane system of government and treatment of natives throughout South Africa had been one of the main incentives for Confederation in the eyes of statesmen such as Lord Carnarvon. The treatment of natives in the South African Republic, and its results, had been one of the chief grievances against it. There, under the old Boer constitution (Grondwet), the position of natives was definitely that of a subject and inferior race, incapable of holding land and fit only for menial service. It was necessary to determine what system should be adopted in the new Colonies. It was—and is—a difficult and complicated question, rendered more difficult and complicated both by the different stages of civilization reached by the natives and by the different systems which obtained in the several Colonies. The plan of administration through the medium of the native chiefs, and the retention of the tribal system, had been kept in Basutoland, the Transvaal, and Bechuanaland. This system, if properly worked, yielded very good results. In Natal, the system of large native reserves represented by Indunas was the inheritance from the experience of Shenstone and Wolseley. Cape Colony retained in some parts the Reserve, the Location and the "Glen Grey" systems, and in the Transkeian territories that of direct British rule and the consequent development of the native at which Lord Grey had aimed.

In accordance with the resolution of the Convention, Milner issued commissions in September for a South African Native Commission to meet in Cape Town. When the Cape Ministry raised some trivial objections, which appeared intended to wreck the Conference, perhaps because, on the eve of an election, it was thought desirable to avoid a declaration on native policy, Milner went straight to the point. He asked for a definite statement, as to whether they denied his right to issue such commissions (28/9/03).[1] Under the able chairmanship of Sir Godfrey Lagden, the Commission issued (Jan., 1905) a report of great and permanent value.[2] It was the first survey which attempted to treat the native question from the point of view of South Africa as a whole. Unhappily, Milner did not stay there long enough to bring it to fruition.

Discussion on the native question and alien immigration, which were part of the agenda of the Customs Conference, led to some important resolutions. The idea of importing Asiatic labour, to

[1] Milner Papers, LV, v, and XXXIV, i, 47. [2] Cd. 2339.

make good the deficiency of African native labour, was already being discussed. The Convention, after making some suggestions for increasing the supply by improving the treatment of native labourers, registered its conviction that the population south of the Zambesi could not satisfy the requirements of the several Colonies as well as those of the large industrial and mining centres. Permanent settlement of Asiatic races, they asserted, should not be permitted. But it would be permissible, if industrial development positively required it, to introduce unskilled Asiatic labourers, under Government control, with provision for indentures of service and repatriation at the end of service.

So far as improved conditions of labour in the mines was concerned, Milner himself had long been working to this end. He had called for a report upon the food, housing, and medical treatment of the native labourers in May, 1902, and had been shocked by the account he received from Dr. C. L. Sansom. He at once made earnest representations to the mine owners, and persuaded them to carry out a complete revolution in the condition of the mines. A Committee of doctors was appointed to consider means of reducing the appallingly high death-rate among the workers. They reported in June, 1903, and, thanks to the exertions of Dr. Sansom and the steady pressure exercised by Milner, the death-rate was swiftly reduced from fifty-four to thirty per thousand.[1] These two figures indicate clearly enough the magnitude of the evil and the efficacy of the remedies then applied. "The conversion," wrote Mr. Amery, "of noisome dens into wholesome barracks, of an ill-housed, ill-fed, neglected crowd of natives, sodden with scurvy and tuberculosis, into a well-fed, properly tended and reasonably healthy army of workers, and the creation of a sound public opinion among those responsible for the conditions in the mines, was an achievement which, standing alone, might have made the reputation of an administrator. In Milner's case, it passed almost unnoticed in the crowd of more important or more controversial issues." [2]

It was recognized on all hands that it was largely due to Milner's untiring efforts that the Customs Conference came to a successful conclusion. On the 15th he had noted in his *Diary* "the probable breakdown of negotiations on the native question." Nor did he

[1] Report on mortality in mines, C.O. returns 1903 and 1904, 205, 345, and on condition of native labour, Cd. 2025.

[2] "*The Times* History of the War in South Africa," VI, 114, 115.

confine himself to the harassing task of bringing so many diverse interests into final agreement. For he was busy at the same time completing his great " Repatriation " despatch.

Extract from Diary.

March 16, 1903. Another day of really fearful drive. I began working as usual before 7, and did not stop, except for meals, till long past midnight. Every moment not devoted to the Conference was spent in completing my long despatch to the Secretary of State, and I kept two shorthand writers at it all day. . . .

March 31. Usual morning. I have now got into the habit of being called at 6.30, getting up at once, and working till 8, then bath and dressing and breakfast, which last collectively about an hour, then working on till 1.30. This gives me nearly 6 hours work by myself before luncheon. . . .

Extract from Letter. Sir Henry Birchenough to Lord Milner.

No Date. 1903. . . . I hear both from Hime and the other delegates at the Customs Conference how admirable you were in tact and temper. They all say the Convention is due to your personality, and unique position in the minds of all South Africans. I did not need to come to South Africa to learn what you had done and what you were here, but it has been one long happiness during my two months' happy stay with you to see how complete is your success in this difficult country. I shall leave it fuller than ever of affectionate admiration for and pride in your great achievements. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson.

24/3/03. [SECRET AND PERSONAL] . . . I wonder what you will think of the results of the Conference. Personally, I am satisfied, without being enthusiastic. We ended up with a gushing resolution about Federation, but the course of the discussion made me feel more than ever, how great are the obstacles to any real Union. Not only the character, but the material interests of the several Colonies are so widely divergent. As long as we were *in generalibus* we were all Federalists. But no sooner did any definite proposal crop up than Particularism was rampant. And this was a Conference, at which the bringing of all parties " under one net " was comparatively easy, for I virtually controlled 3 of the States and had considerable influence with a fourth (Natal). Without some such centripetal force, there would have been no agreement. As it was, things looked on several occasions like our breaking up in disorder and with mutual recriminations. . . .

CHAPTER XIII

Drought and the Labour Difficulty—Lord Milner's Refusal of Colonial Secretaryship—Chinese Labour

Drought and the Labour Difficulty (1903–4)

HARDLY had the wheels of progress thus begun to revolve under Milner's direction, when the realization of his plans was almost fatally endangered by two factors, unprecedented in their intensity: drought and shortage of labour. The task of resettlement was delayed, and its expense enormously increased by the failure of the rains. The lateness of the spring rains which, as we have seen (p. 375), had not fallen until December, had impeded the efforts of the repatriated farmers. But thanks to Government aid in ploughing and sowing, a fair crop of mealies and essential forage was in prospect for 1903. Then, from the first weeks in 1903 to the first weeks of 1904, the blight of a record drought was laid upon the land. The mealie crop proved an almost complete failure; the wheat crop, sown in April, in many places a total failure. Plagues of locusts and caterpillars, encouraged by the drought, devoured the scanty crops which had survived it. For the first time in the memory of man the Caledon River ran dry, and the wheat crop failed in Basutoland as elsewhere. In the Orange River Colony, all who lived by the land—landowners, natives, bywoners—needed and received Government assistance.[1]

The disastrous effects of this visitation were shown in two ways. On the one hand, half the work of the Repatriation Department had to be done again. Thanks to its efforts, famine was averted. But the cost of feeding the starving farmers, and re-sowing their crops depleted the financial resources, which it had been intended to apply to reconstruction and development. On the other hand, the disappointment and hardships of the farmers caused discontent.

[1] Cf. Beak, G. B., "Aftermath of War"; Worsfold, W. B., op. cit., I, 84–7; "*The Times* History of the War in South Africa," VI, 99–101; Cd. 1551.

The opportunity of turning their discontent to political advantage was not lost. The Boer leaders entered upon a campaign of misrepresentation and abuse of the Repatriation Department, with the object of inducing their sorely tried compatriots to believe that they were the men to redress their wrongs, and that Codlin was their friend, not Short.

Drought falling in the most critical of years was a cruel stroke of ill-fortune. Economic depression was its inevitable result. But its financial effect would have been comparatively small in importance, had it not been accompanied by a check in the rapid expansion of the mines, upon which all Milner's calculations for the prosperity of the country, and consequently the employment and immigration of British white labour, had been based. For the financial position depended upon the gold industry, and the gold industry depended upon the employment of native labour.

Shortage of African labour had long been felt not only in the Transvaal, but also in Natal, in the Cape Colony, in Rhodesia. The convention by which, in South Africa, manual labour is relegated to the native, and the dividing line is drawn between skilled white and unskilled coloured labour, made it socially and economically impossible to solve the problem by employing white labour in the mines at a moment's notice.

A solution on these lines was, however, advocated and tried by Mr. F. H. Cresswell [1] and a group of men who presently formed the White Labour Party. Milner watched their experiment with interest and sympathy; for at the back of it lay the conviction that the white community ought not to live in economic dependence upon the black. But the majority of mine-owners rejected it, as not affording an economically possible and immediate way out of the difficulty. And immediate solution was vital, if the situation was to be saved. For the prosperity, not only of the capitalists, but also of every settler in South Africa depended upon a swift and great expansion of the mining industry. In December, 1901, as we have seen, Milner had concluded a *modus vivendi* with the Governor-General of Mozambique for continuing the recruiting of native labour in Portuguese East Africa. But gradually it was realized that the reservoir of native labour in South Africa had been fully tapped. The increased demand for railway and reconstructional work throughout the Colonies had outstripped the supply.

[1] Manager for a time of the Village Main Reef Mine. Minister of Labour, etc., in General Hertzog's Ministry, 1924–1933.

Logically, it followed as the night the day, that the remedy was to be found in the importation of Asiatic labour from India, China, or Japan. The Customs Conference had agreed (p. 454) that, if it should prove impossible to draw a sufficient number of natives from Central and East Africa, such importation, under definite limitations and control, would be permissible. The idea of importing Indians or Chinese had been mooted for some time past (May, August, 1902). But mine-owners were warned that the Kaffir problem was bad enough, without the addition of a Chinese problem. The other Colonies of the Empire, which had contributed their blood and treasure to secure the status of British citizens, and were determined to keep their own lands as white men's countries, were angrily amazed at the idea of introducing the coolie labour they had themselves determined to exclude.[1] But South Africa, with its enormous preponderance of natives, could never be a white man's country in the Australian or New Zealand sense. South Africans, however, were prejudiced against the importation of Asiatics by the experience of Natal, where the wrong type of Indian, brought over to work on the plantations, had been allowed to settle and turn small shopkeeper.[2] It began to be whispered, too, that the refusal of the owners to employ white labour in the mines was due to their dread of the Trades Unions which would follow.

Chamberlain's attitude towards the problem has been shown above (Ch. XII, p. 438). Everybody, in fact, was averse from importing Chinese coolies, unless it should prove to be absolutely essential. Obviously the right course was to exhaust all possible means of recruiting labour otherwise. Milner made an attempt to obtain 10,000 coolies from India, but it was blocked by the conditions laid down by the Indian Government.[3] Efforts were also made to increase recruiting from Central and East Africa. The results were small and unsatisfactory. Milner also tried the experiment of bringing out 500 navvies from England (June, 1903) for railway construction. It had to be abandoned as an expensive failure, because the work performed by them cost nearly four times as much as it would have done had native labour been employed.[4] Evidently, even if the introduction of white labour into the mines were only to double, and not quadruple, the cost of production, as was estimated in the case of the Village Main Reef, such an increase would have been fatal to the expansion, almost to the

[1] Cd. 1895.
[2] Milner Papers, XXXI, i, 30.
[3] Cd. 1683.
[4] Cd. 1895, pp. 109–66.

existence, of the industry. Moreover, the reluctance of white labourers to do "Kaffirs' work," affected their efficiency. The Labour Commission, in fact, reported that white labour could not economically compete with black in the lower fields of manual industry.[1] It followed that when the economical balance was struck, the employment of white side by side with black labour in the mines would involve a reduction of wages and standard of living among the white labourers. Milner put his view clearly upon that point to a Deputation from the White League. He said:

"Our welfare depends upon increasing the quantity of our white population, but not at the expense of its quality. We do not want a white proletariat in this country. The position of the whites among the vastly more numerous black population requires that even their lowest ranks should be able to maintain a standard of living far above that of the poorest section of the population of a purely white country. But, without making them hewers of wood and drawers of water, there are scores and scores of employments in which white men could be honourably and profitably employed, if we could at once succeed in multiplying our industries and in reducing the cost of living. . . . However you look at the matter, you always come back to the same root principle—the urgency of that development which alone can make this a white man's country in the only sense in which South Africa can become one, and that is, not a country full of poor whites, but one in which a largely increased white population can live in decency and comfort. That development requires capital; we have got the capital, but it also requires a large amount of rough labour. And that labour cannot, to any great extent, be white, if only because, pending development and the subsequent reduction in the cost of living, white labour is much too dear."[2]

The logic of the situation drove men to the inevitable, though disagreeable, conclusion. Even those of the mine-owners who had been most opposed to the introduction of Chinese, found themselves obliged to demand it. By the end of March a campaign was begun with this object. Opposition was organized by the White League, mainly on the grounds that, if once brought in, the Chinaman

[1] Cd. 1894, Nov., 1903. The average cost of Europeans employed in the mines in 1904 was £295 per head; of native labourers, £46.

[2] June 2, 1903. Cd. 1895, pp. 37–44; cf. Sir Lionel Philipps, "Transvaal Problems."

might be allowed to stay.[1] The following letters show how Milner was forced to the conviction, "slowly arrived at, but all the stronger," as he wrote to Sir Henry McCallum (25/5/03), that importation of Chinese had become necessary.[2] But, following Chamberlain's wise precept, that the Transvaal should be treated as much as possible as if it were already a self-governing Colony, he felt that this was one of those questions on which he ought not to attempt to force public opinion, or to take action unless and until its trend had become unmistakable. In April, he expressed agreement with a correspondent who suggested that the supply of native labour for the great industrial centres might be largely increased, if more care and forethought were exercised by employers in the matter of transport, housing, and food. Considerable improvement was, indeed, already being made in these directions (*v.* p. 454). Something, too, but not much, could be done by introducing native labour from north of the Zambesi. But, he concluded :

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Dr. J. E. Moffat.

1/4/03. [PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL] . . . I believe that when everything is done that can be, we shall still be short, and very short, of unskilled labour for the enormous industrial development (far greater than anyone who has not seen this country recently can picture) which is within the reach of the Transvaal and of all South Africa, if only workmen can be found. The ultimate solution, I quite agree with you, is in the increase of the white population and in getting rid of the idea, as with an increased white population we shall get rid of it, that the white man cannot, or ought not to, work with his hands in this country. But, in order to get that white population at all, we must make things move in the immediate future, and, certain as I am that African labour, with every improvement we can make, will not be sufficient to supply our wants in the early future, I think we must call in the aid of the Asiatics. I look upon this as a temporary expedient, but for the time being essential. I totally disbelieve that with proper regulations it would be impossible to ensure the return of Indians or Chinese, brought into this country solely for unskilled labour, to their original homes. This is what these people themselves desire. They want to go back to their own country with the money they save here, which would make them comparatively rich men in their own country. . . .

[1] Milner Papers, XXVIII, ii, 66. [2] *Ibid.*, XVIII, iii, 108.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. (Sir) E. H. Walton.

8/4/03. . . . I am coming to the conclusion that in all probability we must have some Asiatics—not necessarily Chinese—here for our industrial development. I am dead against the Asiatic settler and trader, but I do not believe the indentured Asiatic labourer would prove uncontrollable. And, without the impetus he would give, I do not see how we are to have that great influx of British population—for superior skilled work, trades, professions and agriculture—which is the ultimate salvation. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir George Farrar.

21/4/03. [PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL] . . . As regards Asiatics, I am getting increasingly anxious, not indeed to take part in the fray, but to clear away some misunderstandings which are mischievous here, but even more mischievous in England. The great and fatal confusion in people's minds is between Asiatic *Immigration* and Asiatic Importation. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

6/4/03. . . . I am anxious to give you an inside view of the labour controversy here, which, I think, is hardly taking the direction which you might gather from the reports of the Press. The feeling in favour of Asiatic labour, especially Indian, and in case of absolute necessity, of Chinese, has certainly grown very rapidly since you were here, among the general public, and is even beginning to affect the working man. It is violently opposed by the labour agitators, and by [Mr. W. F.] Monypenny, the Editor of the *Star*, and between them they have a strong following, though I doubt whether, if the matter were to be decided by the ballot even to-day, they would have a majority. . . . Not that anybody wishes it. That is quite clear. But the position of the majority of thinking men to-day, which, I believe, will be the position of the majority of the whole population presently, is that, if other resources have been fairly tried and failed, we should not reject Asiatics altogether, but devote all our ingenuity to seeing how we can regulate their labour in such a manner that they will not flood us in other industries and trades than mining. The question is one on which I think I ought to maintain an attitude of neutrality, ready to lend assistance to any reasonable experiment, but carefully abstaining from any attempt to force public opinion one way or the other.

Following your wise precept, that we should treat the Transvaal, though a Crown Colony, wherever possible as if it were self-governing, I should say that this is just one of the questions

which the people must fight out for themselves, and on which the Government should only take action when the trend of public opinion was quite unmistakable. In the meantime, I am still in favour of doing anything in reason to introduce white labour, and to give every facility for getting coloured labour from other parts of Africa. South Africa, it becomes increasingly evident to me, has not got labour enough, even if the blacks were more industrious than they are. I believe that the Mines will succeed very shortly in getting back to their old numbers, perhaps in somewhat increasing them, but only at the expense of other people. Every other industry, not to say agriculture, will presently begin to feel the pinch, and then the advocates of Asiatic labour will be reinforced from wholly unexpected quarters. The moment it ceases to be a "Mining Magnates'" question and becomes a general question, the popular feeling will turn even more decidedly than it is doing at present. At the same time, I trust that, if we *do* import Asiatics, we shall be able to bring them here in indentured troops, primarily for the Mines, and perhaps for certain other big enterprises, such as Railways, thus setting free the local coloured labour for general employment, including the land. In that case, I think the danger of the Asiatic spreading all over the country, settling here permanently, and adding to our already numerous racial difficulties, would be minimized.

As far as the Transvaal is concerned, however, the Asiatic is not yet at the door. It is different with Rhodesia. There the progress of the mining industry is absolutely stopped, unless they can get *some* Asiatic labour. And their difficulties will increase the more the Transvaal labour market, in which wages have now been raised, competes with them. The case of Rhodesia is most piteous, inasmuch as its only other resource, agriculture, has suffered, for a second or third time, an overwhelming disaster—redwater. Under these circumstances it does seem to me that it would be both a cruelty and an injustice, if we forbad Rhodesia making an experiment in Asiatic labour, especially as that experiment would be on a small scale and might be very instructive to all the rest of us. This indeed was the *raison d'être* of the Bloemfontein Conference declaring the introduction of Asiatics to be "permissible." Nobody present wanted Asiatics, but everybody felt that in his own individual case they might become necessary. The general sentiment was, that as long as every precaution was taken to repatriate the Asiatics, each Colony must be allowed to judge of its own necessities in this respect, and that no Colony should be entitled to throw stones at its neighbour, if it felt obliged to have recourse to Asiatics, but rather that they should all stand together to uphold the right of each individual State to provide for its special

requirements in its own way, with a general understanding that the Asiatics were not to be encouraged to settle permanently. . . .

The inter-relation between the financial stagnation caused by shortage of labour and the progress of development, is brought out in the following letter as plainly as the courage and clear-sightedness with which Milner accepted the logic of facts and faced the future, provided others would do the same :

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Just.[1]

14/6/03. . . . The estimate of the ordinary expenditure of the Transvaal has gone up much more than I imagined. I always took £3,000,000 as the normal figure for this, and certainly did not anticipate that this would be exceeded in 1903–4. As a matter of fact, the Transvaal Government has now shoved in estimates of £3,750,000. This is a serious disturbance of my calculations, and I am struggling to get them down to £3,600,000. Even if I succeed in this, which I shall do or nearly do, it leaves me £500,000 to the bad on the whole calculation. This is the first bad " howler " I have come in dealing with the enormous mass of figures of all sorts which have been buzzing round me for the last two years, and, though I say it myself, I think my average is not a bad one, especially as it was beyond reasonable anticipation that the Transvaal Departments would be quite as extravagant as they have been. The reason, of course, is that there has been such an enormous amount to do, that people have naturally enough gone ahead and done it as best they could, and there has been no man of sufficient power who could have been spared exclusively for the work of control. . . . Whatever the cause, and whoever may be to blame, we are £500,000 to the bad. It is very unpleasant, but there is no cause for anxiety. . . . I am not anxious about the future. The Transvaal Revenue is very moderately estimated, taking account of the fact that we are in the trough of the sea, owing to the total failure of South Africa, or indeed Africa as a whole, to supply us with the necessary Native Labour. I reckon that in less than six months this fact, which is apparent to every reasoning man already, will have sufficiently impressed itself upon the bulk of the community as to cause them to desist from their present insane opposition to imported labour. Once we are allowed to import say 50,000, rising perhaps ultimately to 100,000, Asiatics (Coolies, Chinamen or Japs), the Mines and all other industrial enterprise will go ahead, not indeed with leaps

[1] Sir H. W. Just, of the Colonial Office, who had accompanied his Chief to South Africa.

and bounds, but at a fair pace, and our Revenue will greatly increase. I allow six months for the conversion of the populace, six more months for getting the labour, and think, therefore, that it is reasonable to suppose that by 1904–5 our interrupted development will have once more resumed its natural course, in which case all anxieties about public finance will be a thing of the past. . . .[1]

"The conversion of the populace," indeed, was proceeding apace. Not that opposition was altogether silenced. The African Labour League and Witwatersrand Trades and Labour Council made their objections heard, and a deputation from the White League waited on Milner on June 2. The Boer leaders lay low until they saw that they could make political capital out of the agitation against the Chinese, in order to discredit the Government and press the demand for self-government.[2]

In the Cape Colony, too, feeling was still strong against the introduction of Asiatic labour, and resolutions to that effect were passed in Assembly and forwarded to the Secretary of State. They gave as their reasons that it would increase the preponderance of the coloured over the white population, and check the civilizing of the natives.[3]

In his reply to the White League Deputation,[4] from which we have already quoted (p. 459), Milner observed that the ultimate verdict rested with the judgment of the great central body of the community upon a question of fact—whether the development of the country, upon which the increase of the white population depended, could be proceeded with "at anything like a reasonable pace, without the assistance of Asiatic indentured labour." "The strongest argument," he added, "in favour of unskilled Asiatic labour is, that it will open up a field for the employment of a vastly increased number of whites, and well-paid whites. . . . The proposal to get a work of urgent public importance done by work-

[1] Cf. the despatches on the financial position of the two Colonies for 1902–3 and 1903–4, printed in Cd. 1552, 1586.

[2] Milner to Lyttelton, 11 and 13/2/04. Cd. 1899. Nos. 2, 7–9.

[3] Milner Papers, XXVIII, ii, 88; Cd. 1895.

[4] Cd. 1895. Apart from an unreasoning jealousy of "capitalists," and fears lest the Chinese would "take money out of the country" and not spend it in the shops, and yet that they would remain in other employments, the prevailing prepossession of the Deputation appears to have been that they would reduce the employment of white labour. The Deputation solemnly affirmed that, though the Rand Native Labour Association was spending £50,000 a year on the endeavour to recruit native labour in Africa, this was only being done by the mine-owners as a blind, and to cover their desire for Chinese! The suggestion that natives should be compelled to work was made by some and dismissed by Milner.

men from abroad, who will neither interfere with any of us while they are here, nor remain to compete with us when they are no longer wanted, rather than to leave that work undone, seems to me such absolute common sense, that I for one should be surprised if it met with opposition even from those who, in a general way, are averse to Asiatic labour. . . ."

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain.

13/7/03. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . My one great anxiety is *Labour.* . . . It is quite evident now, that Africa cannot supply all our requirements. . . . The change in opinion here since my letter (*May* 31) is remarkable. I then wrote "Among thinking men the necessity of Asiatic labour is becoming generally recognized." This is truer than ever. But I went on to say "At the same time I must reluctantly admit, that the unreasoning crowd appears as much opposed to Asiatics as ever." This is no longer true. If you polled "the men in the street" now, you would find an enormous change of opinion. A Mass Meeting against Asiatic importation is no longer possible. A Mass Meeting in favour of it may be possible very soon. The conversion of the average Briton is being accompanied by a very strong movement among the Boers in the same direction. Three months ago the Boers were to a man against Chinese. Now a very considerable minority, at any rate, are strongly in favour of them. They argue and rightly, "If the mines can get Asiatic labour, there will be more Kaffirs to spare for us." . . . It is sincerely to be hoped that the Chinese—since they are now our only hope—may come, and come quickly. The Mines have exhausted their efforts, by higher wages, better recruiting, and *much better arrangements on the mines in every respect*—food, clothing, sanitation, etc.—to get natives, but, though they have got *some thousands more*, there are not nearly enough. The fact is *they do not exist*—not in these numbers. . . . My conjectural time-table is as follows: October. Report of Commission establishing inadequacy of African Supply. December. Transvaal Legislature passes Ordinance providing for importation of indentured Asiatics. January or February. Chinese begin to arrive, if they can be got. . . .

THE WATCH TOWER SPEECH.

Milner's work all this time had been very heavy. Besides other departmental work,[1] he was busily concerned, as Governor

[1] Departmental Reports on Burgher Camps and Burgher Land Settlements, the Law, the Criminal Code, Public Works Departments, Customs and Post Office are in Cd. 1551, 1552, 1553, 1555, 1641.

of the Transvaal, with the revision of the laws affecting the Gold and Diamond industries.[1] Not the least important contribution made at this time to the good government of the two new Colonies was the laying of the foundations for local self-government through elective local bodies. The system upon which the Municipal Corporations were based was worked out by Mr. Lionel Curtis and the nominated Town Council of Johannesburg, under the guidance and inspiration of Milner. Local self-government had been studiously opposed by Kruger (*v.* Cd. 2104).

In his opening Address to the Municipal Congress, which met at Johannesburg on May 18, Milner adopted the saying of Rhodes that civilization, not colour, ought to be the test of fitness for civic rights. But though he wished " the door to be kept open to the native," the feeling of the whole white community was so strongly against extending the municipal franchise to aliens and coloured persons, that Milner did not feel justified in forcing " upon the white population a principle repudiated no less by the British inhabitants than by the Dutch."

In this Address, which was afterwards known as the " Watch Tower Speech," Milner appealed to the Congress to approach the consideration of matters which had a wide import, beyond the immediate scope of municipal affairs, in a spirit of statesmanship. " By a spirit of statesmanship," he continued, " I mean above all a spirit which does not aggravate practical difficulties by needlessly offending sentiment. It may be the duty of a statesman to run counter to sentiment. He may have to attack it boldly, as a surgeon plunges his knife boldly into the human body in order to remove some deep-seated sore. But it can never be the part of statesmanship needlessly to wound susceptibilities, to go on scraping a sore place merely for the pleasure of scraping it."

One such matter involved in municipal legislation was their attitude towards the native population. On that point he gave his views as a private citizen : " There is a well-defined dislike to what are known as the opinions of Exeter Hall. Speaking for myself, there is no man who more condemns what are popularly known as Exeter Hall opinions, by which I mean the sentimental and ignorant view of native questions, than I do. More than that, there is no man more prepared if need were—I do not say there is

[1] There is an interesting chapter in Sir Percy Fitzpatrick's " South African Memories," describing the negotiations on this point, and Milner's share in it. Cf. Milner Papers, XXXIX, i, 48.

any cause, for I think Exeter Hall is a bugbear in these days—to fight that view of the native question than I. But I am not sure that, while we denounce the claptrap of Exeter Hall, we do not keep and cherish in this country an opposite sort of claptrap, which really advances the question as little as the extreme views of Exeter Hall. What is the good, for instance, of perpetually going on shouting that this is a white man's country? Does it mean that it is a country only inhabited by white men? That, of course, is an obvious absurdity, as the blacks outnumber us as five to one. Does it mean a country which ought only to be inhabited by white men? Well, as an ideal that would possibly be all very well, but as a practical statement it surely is perfectly useless. If it means anything, it means that we ought to try and expel the black population, thereby instantly ruining all the industries of the country. What it does mean, I suppose, if any sane meaning can be applied to it, is that the white man should rule. Well, if that is its meaning, there is nobody more absolutely agreed with it than I; but then let us say that plainly, and do not let us only say it, but let us justify it. There is only one ground on which we can justify it, and that is the ground of superior civilization.

"The white man must rule, because he is elevated by many, many steps above the black man; steps which it will take the latter centuries to climb, and which it is quite possible that the vast bulk of the black population may never be able to climb at all. But then, if we justify, what I believe we all hold to, the necessity of the rule of the white man by his superior civilization, what does that involve? Does it involve an attempt to keep a black man always at the very low level of civilization at which he is to-day? I believe you will all reject such an idea. One of the strongest arguments why the white man must rule is because that is the only possible means of gradually raising the black man, not to our level of civilization—which it is doubtful whether he would ever attain—but up to a much higher level than that which he at present occupies.

"But if you are going to defend white supremacy on this ground, and if at the same time you recognize, as I believe you do, the duty and wisdom of doing everything you can to raise the black man as far as he can be raised, what is the consequence? Is it not a consequence of taking your ground on the firm and inexpugnable ground of civilization as against the rotten and indefensible ground of colour, that if a black man, one in a thousand—perhaps it would be more correct to say one in a hundred thousand—raises himself to a

white level of civilization—I will not speak now of the very highest level attained by white, because a black man getting to that level is at present entirely out of sight in South Africa, but to the average white level—should not his treatment be that which you accord to a white man, because you justify your especial treatment of white men by a civilization to which, *ex hypothesi*, he has attained?

"I am not speaking of the question of political rights. Those of the black men, the natives, have been relegated, and I think wisely relegated, to the future for decision. It stands firm and is unquestionable, that that must be decided by a legislature elected by the white population of this country alone. But I am speaking of other privileges accorded to civilized men. Can you, if you base the supremacy of the white man upon his civilization, deny to other men who have attained his level in that respect, the rights which are granted to him? Now there are two practical ways in which that matter arises. One has already been decided. In the native legislation of this Colony, containing as it does very special regulation of natives, which their low state of civilization requires, we have made certain exceptions. They apply to very few people, but the natives who attain a high degree of education and culture are exempted from the restrictions placed on natives generally. The practical importance of the matter is very small, because this class is extremely limited, and will be so for a long time, but the principle is very important. Well, then the principle crops up again in connection with municipal rights.

"Is it to be laid down that the native, who has even a high degree of education and civilization, and who is, I think, to be admired on that account, is, nevertheless, to be ignored in the management of those municipal questions and matters of health and sanitation, which, if he is a civilized man, must affect him as much as they affect the white? Is he to have no voice whatever in such matters? . . . For all our sakes, it is of profound importance that the general standard of native civilization should be immensely raised. Even as a purely material question, it is one of the greatest importance, for if there is one thing that has come out in this discussion of this labour question, it is that the mere mechanical value of the native who has risen to some state of civilization is enormously greater than that of the man still on bed-rock. But if you are going to raise the mass of natives, and mind you, it will take years and years to raise them even so far as to the level of your waist, it stands to reason that a certain

number of them will rise to the level of your shoulder. Are you going to put back the whole progress of civilization by banging them on the head the moment that they do so? . . .

"I feel even more strongly perhaps about the coloured class. The vast majority of them are in a deplorably low state of civilization. There is a small section, a very small section, unfortunately, who have overcome the enormous disadvantages of their origin, and who have attained to a considerable degree of civilization. It is a further consideration, which I do not wish to lay too much stress upon, that throughout South Africa men of that class, for whom personally I feel the deepest sympathy, have stood most loyally in the great struggle for enfranchisement by the side of those who have been in favour of that wider extension of popular liberties, which is what the triumph of the British idea in this country means. They have been amongst its most ardent supporters; I should be sorry if one of the first fruits of our victory was to place an indelible stigma upon them. Speaking again my personal opinions, opinions perhaps not shared by the majority of those here, perhaps not shared by any of them, I shall think it an unhappy day when any large British community in South Africa completely and finally repudiates the doctrine of one of the greatest of South African statesmen—'equal rights for every civilized man.' . . ."

Passing to the question of Asiatic immigration, Milner suggested that whatever steps might be found necessary to restrict an indiscriminate influx of Asiatics as traders and settlers, opposition to it ought to be based on the strong and unassailable grounds of social and economic reasons, and not upon the weak ground of colour. "It is not a question of colour, it is a question of civilization, and it has a material bearing upon the position of Asiatics already here. How can we hope to be regarded as anything but blindly hostile to men of colour, if we are going to deny to the most educated and civilized Asiatic who may be already established among us, if we are going to deny him—I don't say political rights; again, it is not a question of political rights—all the other privileges which civilized men enjoy? Such a position, in my opinion, is a very difficult one indeed to maintain as a mere matter of policy, apart from considerations of humanity, of Christianity, of good breeding. Is it justifiable to denounce Asiatics as Asiatics, and to take the view that all of them, whatever their degree of civilization, must be unwelcome here, or, if they come here, should be treated as pariahs? Suppose for a moment, that some great Indian aristocrat, some

man of wealth and education, some man belonging to what is one of the most ancient, and, in some ways, one of the most civilized races of the world, were to come to live here, to live in all respects as a civilized man, perhaps to distinguish himself—as many of them have distinguished themselves in England—by works of philanthropy, would you insist upon his being sent to a location? . . . There is an indiscriminate way of dealing with this question, an indiscriminate language which is being used about it, which would seem to justify even such extravagant methods as these, which every man of sense would at once repudiate. . . . I have made these remarks" (he concluded), "because I see that questions which are not merely local, and which have wide-reaching consequences which many people do not think of, are too important to be dealt with on purely local and rather narrow grounds. Now, I invite your consideration to some wider aspects of these questions to which I have referred. I am the man on the watch tower, and the man on the watch tower may see further than the men on the veldt, not in the least because he is a better man, but because of the mere accident of his topographical position. I hope that here and elsewhere . . . what I have said will influence other discussions in other Assemblies, which may have to deal with these questions to which I have referred, and I hope the effect of what I say may be at any rate to mitigate what I may call the savagery of the opposition which exists in certain quarters with certain sections of our fellow-creatures. It may be, or may not be, right to give them certain privileges; it must be wrong to refuse them in a way which leaves an enduring sense of injury and oppression. I am perfectly certain that it would not be the wish of this assembly to do that. . . ."

The Great Refusal.

As High Commissioner, Milner also presided over the Inter-colonial Council, which held its first meeting on July 2 at Johannesburg and drew up the first inter-colonial budget.

With the close of the first session of the Inter-colonial Council, which Milner described to Chamberlain as "a great success," [1] he was free at last to take the leave for which he had bargained at Johannesburg. He informed his Chief (13/7/03) that he proposed to spend six weeks on the Continent in absolute seclusion, and

[1] The proceedings of the Inter-colonial Council and Milner's Speeches are in Cd. 1163 and 2104.

thereafter three or four weeks in London, returning to South Africa at the end of November.

Extract from Letter. Miss Violet Markham to Lord Milner.

30/7/03. . . . I fear your work has been heavy of late, and more than usually trying; but all the great emancipators in the world's history from Moses downwards have had to meet that inconsequent cry of "would to God that we had died in Egypt" and the grumbling of those they had freed; and so I suppose it will be to the end of time. But looking back over the past four years you must indeed feel from how great a bondage you have freed the land and how broad-based you have laid the foundations of its future greatness and prosperity. I wish I could do more for "the cause" which is as dear to me as ever. . . .

Milner left for Europe on August 7. He sailed from Lourenço Marques in a small Austrian Lloyd liner for quiet's sake, and was soon deep in De Wet's "Three Years War," Holland Rose's "History of Napoleon"—"a stiff bit of reading, but exceedingly interesting"—the "Anneau d'Améthyste," by Anatole France, and Haldane's "Essays on Education and Empire." At Beira he was impressed by the progress which had been made in that settlement since his last visit six years before, and also by the complaints of a Deputation of Rhodesians from Salisbury as to the retarding influence of heavy railway rates. A night was spent at Mozambique, enjoying "enormously" the beauty of the place and the hospitality of the British Consul. On the 16th Milner landed at Mombasa, and next day made an early morning trip up the Uganda Railway as far as Masiras, before sailing at 10 a.m.

The next few days were spent in writing and sorting "the accumulated letters of the last year or two," reading Maeterlinck's "Le Temple Enseveli," and Mrs. Humphry Ward's "Lady Rose's Daughter," "which has more real vitality and spontaneous movement than any book of Mrs. Ward's which I have yet read." Then back to work, making notes on "my translation of . . . secret Boer documents captured by [Col.] Henderson." At Suez news was received of the death of Lord Salisbury. Milner landed at Trieste, and after four days at Vienna, where "I declined to be interviewed," left for Carlsbad. There he stayed, doing the "cure" from September 7 to 26. The quiet routine of walks and waters and mud baths was broken suddenly and surprisingly. On the 18th, rumours were rife that Chamberlain was about to resign

from the Unionist Government in order to be free to preach his Tariff Reform Crusade in the country. On the 20th, " Telegrams show that a messenger is on his way to me from Balfour " (*Diary*). Milner, in fact, as he at once guessed, was about to receive the highest compliment that could then have been paid to him. The King's Messenger, arriving on the following day, delivered a letter from the Prime Minister inviting him to succeed Chamberlain as Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Extract from Letter. Mr. A. J. (Lord) Balfour to Lord Milner.

[17/9/03.] You will have seen the startling changes which have just occurred on the political stage. From them you will gather that some of my colleagues have separated themselves from me because they stick to the rigid tradition which falsely calls itself " free trade." While Chamberlain has gone because the deletion of a tax on food from the list of immediate political possibilities puts him in a *personal* difficulty, the nature of which is fully disclosed in our public correspondence (sent herewith). In these circumstances I cannot conceive a worthier successor at the Colonial Office than yourself. I am sure you could do invaluable service to the Empire at the head of a Department under which you have served with such conspicuous distinction. . . . I know . . . that you are fully aware of the great pleasure it would be to me to have you as a colleague ; or what confidence it would give the country that the office would still be administered by a big man on big lines. . . .

This flattering offer, so charmingly conveyed, of an office so perfectly suited to his abilities and Imperial instincts, must have been difficult enough for Milner to refuse in any case. It was made doubly so when Balfour, who had gone to Balmoral directly after writing the above letter, sent him the following gracious message from his Sovereign :

" I am commanded by the King to say that he most highly approves the proposed appointment of yourself and earnestly hopes you will accept it."

The opportunity to be rid of the harassing anxieties and renewed stress of labour which awaited him in South Africa, might have tempted a man less careless of self-interest. A more potent argument with a man of Milner's instincts lay in the call to an office in which he then, beyond all men, could help to preserve continuity of Colonial administration and maintain the atmosphere of confidence and co-operation with the Colonies, which Chamberlain had created.

The reasons which prompted him to refuse this high honour were wholly characteristic. He was convinced that he could serve the country best by returning to South Africa instead of leaving it at a time of great difficulty. He would not " leave things at a loose end " there, for his successor to clear up, but felt bound to " stick to the new Colonies " as long as they needed him. He sat up late that night composing the following letter, and another in answer to the King's personal message :

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Balfour.

20/9/03. . . . I feel much honoured and touched by your kind letter of the 17th. That you should think me worthy of attempting to succeed the greatest Colonial Secretary our country has ever had, is the highest compliment which has ever been paid, or is ever likely to be paid me. It is not, however, any sense of the enormous difficulty of the task, which prevents my accepting your offer, though it would certainly cause me to accept it with diffidence. Neither is it any want of sympathy with your government. Most earnestly do I desire its continuance and success, alike on public and personal grounds. But I am honestly convinced that, at the present juncture, I can render the government and the country better service in the position I actually hold than in the higher office which you offer me. On grounds of health and for other personal reasons I have for some time been anxious to leave South Africa and to enjoy, for a time at any rate, a complete respite from public cares. Mr. Chamberlain has for some time been aware of this wish on my part, but, when he was in South Africa, he impressed upon me most strongly the duty of remaining at my post until the settlement of the new Colonies was more advanced. The arguments which he then urged and to which I yielded, to the extent of promising to return for at least a year after my present holiday, have lost, in my opinion, none of their cogency in the interval. It is true that I should be still dealing with South African affairs at the Colonial Office, but I think that, in a situation which, though improving, is still full of difficulty, my personal influence on the spot has a somewhat special value, and that what the Government might lose by its withdrawal would not be compensated by my bringing a somewhat weary mind to bear on a number of new questions, of which I have no previous experience. A year or eighteen months hence I hope I may retire from South Africa with a good conscience. At present I should retire with an uneasy feeling that I was leaving things at a loose end, and not giving quite a fair chance to my successor. I believe that if I were to go fully into the details, you would concur

in this view. But it would be unjustifiable to trouble you, especially at a time of such pressure, with a long disquisition. Suffice it to say that, after giving the matter my most earnest consideration, I feel it my duty to stick to the new Colonies as long as, in my judgment, they need me, always provided that I retain the full confidence of H.M. Government, of which, while you are at the head of it, I venture to feel assured. . . .

Balfour was not content to accept this refusal, but telegraphed to Milner, asking him to reconsider it.

Extract from Telegram. Mr. Balfour to Lord Milner.

25/9/03. I have carefully considered all the arguments in your letter, but I am nevertheless most clearly of opinion that you would best serve the Empire by accepting my proposal, and I very earnestly beg you to reconsider your answer. If this is impossible, at least do not make it final, until you have talked it over with me.

" Very much upset by this," Milner wrote in his *Diary*, " and up late thinking over the various issues involved." Next day, he replied that he had not changed his mind, but would come at once to London to see the Prime Minister, if he desired it.

Chamberlain at once wrote (25/9/03) urging him to alter his decision, and explaining that he considered the situation in South Africa had changed since he had put pressure upon him to remain there (Milner Papers, XLVI, iii, 26).

Milner returned to London on September 26, determined to refuse, and certain that he was right, because, as he wrote to his friend Lyttelton Gell (21/9/03), " the man on the spot is for the moment of much more vital importance than the man in Downing Street." It was true that, if the Ministry fell, his career in South Africa would be brought to an end. But he judged that, in that case, he would be less powerless for good as a returned proconsul, free from party connections, than as a rejected Minister. On the other hand, Balfour no doubt felt that, if Milner joined the Government, his prestige and ability might help to repair its failing strength, and was prepared to put the strongest personal pressure upon him. " I know what is right, whatever anybody says," Milner wrote to Gell again (28/9/03), before giving his final decision to Balfour, " but am not sure that I shall be able to resist the personal pressure which is sure to be put upon me."

A " most agitating and eventful day " followed (*Diary*). After

an interview with the Prime Minister lasting nearly three and a half hours, Milner retired " to consult his friends." From ten to midnight the discussion with Balfour was continued, " a long and amicable talk," Milner writes in his *Diary*. But he " finally declined the Colonial Secretaryship." Balfour, however, would not yet accept his refusal. It was agreed that Milner should sleep over it, and write his reply in the morning.[1]

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Balfour.

30/9/03. . . . I have slept, and soundly too—I sleep, however agitating the day—on yesterday's discussion. But the morning finds me in the same mind. It is not obstinacy. And there is a strong personal feeling, all the stronger for our talks of yesterday, drawing me towards your view. Still I cannot the least get over the arguments, so plain to me, though I may not be able to expound them, which make against my leaving South Africa at this stage. . . . The suggestion in your P.S. last night, for which I thank you, does not materially affect my difficulty.[2] I shall leave London this evening. It is the only way to escape being pestered to death. And I should prefer to leave any statement for the public entirely to you. It would, no doubt, emphasize the one great reason for my not coming in, that I do not think I ought to abandon the work, to which I have devoted so many years, at its present necessarily very incomplete stage. . . .[3]

Extract from a Speech by the Rt. Hon. Stanley Baldwin at Oxford, 1925.[4]

" Let me tell you one story of Lord Milner, which I expect will be new to most of you. I tell it to you, not only to show you, if you have any doubt, what manner of man he was, but to show you what the finest type of Englishman at his best can be ; the type that all of us would wish to emulate. Twenty-two years ago Lord Milner had completed about two years of work in the restoration of South Africa, one of the most difficult tasks to which any man had ever been called upon to devote himself, and, by confession on all hands, he had accomplished a work which it is doubtful if anyone else could have accomplished. His praise was in all men's mouths. He was a man who loved his own home in

[1] From Memorandum kindly supplied by the Rt. Hon. J. S. Sandars.

[2] Balfour had written as a " postscript " to their meeting, that there would be no objection to Milner returning to South Africa after accepting the Secretaryship, provided he returned for the meeting of Parliament in February (Milner Papers, XLVI, iii, 29).

[3] A statement to this effect was made by Balfour at Sheffield, Oct. 2.

[4] On Milner and Arnold Toynbee. Published in " On England."

his own country, never so happy as when in England, and there came to him at that moment an offer from Lord Balfour to come home as Secretary of State for the Colonies, a task for which he was peculiarly fitted, and in every way he would have delighted in the work. He declined—and why? He declined it because he knew that, in spite of the success he had achieved, there were coming years of the utmost difficulty in South Africa, years in which probably he would lose all the popularity he had won, years in which possibly his success might be turned into failure, and he said, "No, no, I am not going to go away from here and take the credit of accomplishments up to this point, and leave someone else to come out now to face what must be years of difficulty and distress. I am going to see them through myself."

That shows the finest temper, the finest spirit in which an Englishman could possibly do and face his work. . . . . I make no apology . . . for putting before an Oxford audience the inspiring example of one of her greatest sons. . . ."

Chinese Labour.

Milner returned next day to the Continent, to visit his parents' grave at Tübingen, and arrange for a new monument there. Next day:

Extract from Diary.

Oct. 10 (1903). . . . I took the train from Heckingen to see old Emma.[1] . . . They were all out in the fields, but after some time I succeeded in retrieving the whole family, Emily, her husband, and Josephine, besides various aunts and cousins. I had intended to return by the 6.25, but Emma was so disappointed at this proposal that I stayed till the last train. . . .

Milner returned to England on October 13 to stay with the Clinton Dawkins in the country, whilst paying frequent visits to town to work at the Colonial Office. One week-end was spent with the Chamberlains at Highbury, another with the Goschens at Seacox.

On his visits to London, Milner explained his views on the necessity for a temporary importation of Asiatic labour to his friends in the Liberal party. The extremists, like Campbell-Bannerman and Sir Wilfred Lawson, were opposed to any measure for promoting either land settlement or industrial development, which might tend to increase the British population in the Transvaal. Their ideal was to hand it back to the Boers. Swayed by an intense dislike

[1] Who had been his nurse.

and mistrust of "capitalists" (other than themselves), they were ready to oppose any project which was advocated by the mine-owners as necessary to the prosperity of the Rand. Opposition to the introduction of Asiatic labour offered the additional inducement of a tremendous political opportunity for agitation against any Government that sanctioned it. Such agitation had already begun. Milner was fully aware that a policy of this kind could not be carried through, if it were to be used as a political cry. But as the result of conversations with the more moderate section, he had been assured that those Liberals who had supported him during the war, would continue to do so in a measure which he showed them to be essential to a successful peace, and that they would use their influence to prevent party capital being made out of it.[1] On that understanding, and that understanding alone, he decided to go on with a project, which in a reasonable world would have been recognized as reasonable.

The Unionist Government, on the other hand, had to choose between presenting their opponents with a great party advantage, if they wished to use it unscrupulously, or refuse to sanction a scheme proved to be of immediate and vital importance to the prosperity of one of the Colonies entrusted to their charge. For Milner spared no pains to lay clearly before the Cabinet and the new Secretary for the Colonies, the Hon. Alfred Lyttelton, the seriousness of the position created by the scarcity of native labour.

Farmers and industries of all kinds, he explained,[2] were suffering from the shortage, no less than the mines. No solution of the problem was to be found in immigration of white labour. For the cost of living for white men was so high, that neither farmers nor mines could afford to employ them as manual labourers. The position, Milner argued, was serious both financially and politically. Financially, because the stagnation of industry was throwing hundreds of white men out of work. Politically, because, as he had so often represented, the stability of the new order must depend upon an increase of the British population, and such increase could only be promoted by industrial development. In the Transvaal, where industry was almost synonymous with mining, every white man directly engaged in the mines gave employment indirectly to

[1] Notably in long conversations after dinner-parties given by the Asquiths, on Oct. 1 and 29, in which Sir Edward Grey (Lord Grey) and Mr. (Lord) Haldane took part.

[2] Nov. 6. Milner Papers, XLVI, iii, 42.

at least half a dozen others.[1] Double the output of the mines, as could be done in a twelvemonth if sufficient manual labour were obtainable at reasonable rates, and then the white population of British-minded citizens would be doubled. The political question would then be settled for ever. The only solution, therefore, was to obtain coloured labour from outside South Africa. With the active good-will of the Foreign Office, British Central Africa could help. But 50,000 to 100,000 labourers from the Far East were needed for adequate relief.

A strong Commission had been appointed in July by Sir Arthur Lawley to inquire into the amount of labour needed for the agriculture and industries of the Transvaal, and the possible sources of supply. The evidence given before it had by this time convinced all reasonable men in South Africa that the temporary importation of Asiatic labour was now essential.

The report of the Labour Commission [2] was issued in November and confirmed Milner's statements. The demand for native labourers for the mining industry, it found, exceeded the supply by 129,000, and would rapidly increase; whilst for agriculture, railways and other industries, the demand was also greatly in excess of the supply, and equally likely to grow. No adequate supply could be drawn from Central and South Africa. A minority of two, representing the views of the White Labour League, dissented from the estimates and conclusions of the remaining ten Commissioners. They held that sufficient labour could be found in Africa, and that in many ways natives could be "supplemented and superseded by white labour."

Subsequently (Jan., 1905), the Inter-colonial Commission on Native Affairs estimated the shortfall of labourers at 307,528, and concluded that "there is no doubt that, were British South African natives alone to be relied upon, South African industries could only be worked at half-power" (Cd. 2399).

[1] Subsequently statistics proved that every ten unskilled labourers imported provided employment for one additional European artisan in the mines. By 1905, when 50,000 Chinese coolies were at work, an additional 5,000 skilled white workmen were drawing £1,000,000 a year in wages from the mines. Such wages, of course, provided further employment for those amongst whom they were spent. The influx of white artisans and mechanics, which had long been decreasing, reached its lowest point a month before the arrival of the Chinese, and rose rapidly and continuously afterwards (Cd. 2183; Milner Papers, XXVIII, iii, 196).

[2] Nov. 19. Cd. 1896.

On November 16, Milner was commanded to dine and sleep at Windsor Castle :

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton Gell.

19/11/03. . . . The reason why we don't meet is that except Sundays, which I spend at Fairhill (Dawkins's) trying to recover my breath, my days are all like this ; here is last Monday :

Arrive at Cannon Street	11.5.
Rothschild	11.30–12.30.
Eckstein	12.45–1.
B.S.A. Co.	1–3.
Cabinet	3.30–5.
My own room at C.O. struggling with the aid of a P.S. and a shorthand writer to deal with several scores of letters	5–5.45.
Train to Windsor	6.30.
Arrival at Windsor	7.5.
The King (private audience)	7.15–8.
Dinner, drawing-room, Bridge, talks, etc.	8.30–12.45.

I don't say that every day is quite as important, but it is quite as full. For instance, I was at long Committees of the Cabinet on Tuesday and Wednesday. . . .

Return to South Africa.

During the concluding weeks of his leave, Milner took great pains to conceal his movements when he came to town, in order to " dodge the interviewers." He resolutely avoided all public engagements, and was reluctantly obliged to refuse the twice-repeated offer of Cambridge University to confer upon him the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Law. His departure for South Africa (Nov. 28) was kept equally quiet. The outward voyage was very rough. At one time " in the cabin . . . all the furniture was piled up in an indistinguishable heap at one end, and a heavy arm-chair was chasing me up and down the floor." [1] Always a poor sailor, Milner did not enjoy it, and could do little work. " My brain is never worth anything on a voyage," he wrote to a friend ; " one reads languidly, writes with difficulty, detests talking." The *Diary* shows him " labouring heavily " with Morley's " Life of Gladstone," and then reading with great and surprised interest Judge Byles's " Sophisms of Free Trade."

[1] Speech at Johannesburg, December 19.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Lady Edward Cecil.

12/12/03. . . . I have read 1 volume of the Life of Gladstone. . . . It is not true to say that it is free from bias. It has the bias of a political doctrinaire in favour of his own *doctrines*, not so much of their *champion*, even including the hero himself. But that, after all, was inevitable, and is excusable. Morley really has a candid mind. He may not always be fair, but he always tries to be, and succeeds far better than most people. But, but, but—how very poor a figure his subject really cuts, regarded from the point of view of *statesmanship*. No doubt he was a very fine man. I think his character, as a man, stands the test of this tremendous on-turning of limelight better than I had expected—his enormous industry, his *vitality*, his, in many respects, very magnanimous nature, his intense feeling of responsibility, of the seriousness of life, of the duty of constant purpose—all these things are very fine. Impressive too in the *sheer quantity*—rather than quality, I shall always maintain—of his mental power and of his acquired and *retained* knowledge. A very great character, therefore, and perhaps one's time is better spent in learning from what he was, than nowadays—when he is dead, and therefore harmless, especially as his delusions are dying—in carping at him for what he was not. And even on the political side, while on big questions he was generally unstable and often wholly wrong, there are many compensations. He was the creature of his age, and it was an age of wrong *ideals*. But many of his observations, and much of his practice, as an administrator, are admirable. He was no Mandarin, no dilettante. He was always a most zealous and thorough workman, and when, which was not too often, the job which fortune put him on to was a good job, he did it magnificently. . . . As an antidote to Gladstone, I have been reading an interesting book, the reprint of Judge Byles's " Sophisms of Free Trade," which first appeared about 1850, and has been long neglected. It is a very uneven book, with a good deal of fallacy and exaggeration in it. But, on the other hand, it is wonderful how much Byles *foresaw*, and how free he was from the prevalent claptrap of his time. At bottom, the main lines of his reflection and aims are sound, and he has far more sense, as well as humanity and patriotism, than the prophets of the Manchester School, who were anathema to him. It is an extraordinary thing, when one comes to think of it, how his point of view, which is so much more simple, natural and in touch with fact than their metaphysical abstractions and generalizations, should have been so completely submerged for half a century, and that so many of my generation should have had to spend all that time and thought in *rediscovering the obvious*,

overlaid and almost buried under, a lot of bad, and very superficial political philosophy. What a waste ! . . .

After spending a couple of days at Cape Town (where he was obliged to refuse a public reception), Milner passed on to Johannesburg. There a great demonstration awaited him (Dec. 19). To defray the expenses of a public reception, and to emphasize its popular character, a shilling subscription had been set on foot by the *Transvaal Leader*. There were 8,000 contributors. Welcomed by the Deputy-Mayor, Mr. George Goch,[1] and guards of honour, he was greeted by many thousands of people as he drove to the Wanderers' Club, to be presented with addresses from a number of Municipalities. In acknowledging them, Milner observed that it was the first time in the history of the country that a number of local bodies had acted together, almost all of which derived their authority from popular election. That was a milestone upon the road to constitution-making, which had been reached with encouraging rapidity.

Milner had come back determined to press for Asiatic labour with the utmost vigour. " As to Asiatic labour," he wrote to Mr. Lyttelton Gell (13/12/03), " I foresee great difficulties to be got over before I can get the thing through both for the Transvaal and Rhodesia. This, however, is now my first duty, and I mean to go at it with all the energy, patience, and tenacity which I may possess. I am not at all confident of success, but I shall leave nothing in my power undone to secure it. And you know how in the hard school of life I have been hammered—I was not always like that—into one of the most dogged beasts of burden."

In the Cape Colony, with an election approaching, opposition to Chinese labour was being used to catch the native vote. The Kaffirs were told that they would be swamped by alien labour.

But in the Transvaal, the campaign in favour of it was now in full swing. Reinforced by the Labour Commission's Report and the hard logic of experience, it converted public opinion. A petition for Chinese labour was presently signed by half the adult

[1] One of the founders of the Chamber of Mines, Mr. Goch was Mayor of Johannesburg in 1905, when he presided over the functions attending Lord Milner's departure and Lord Selborne's arrival. Before and after the war he used his influence, as a South African of Dutch descent and as a pioneer in the mining industry, in the cause of conciliation. " He was my old and good friend," Milner wrote at the time of his death. " I can never forget the valuable services he rendered in the Transvaal during the most critical days."

male population of the country (Jan., 1904).[1] For the revenue of the Transvaal was falling off at the rate of £100,000 a month; work on the railways was suspended in September owing to shortage of labour; and the closing down of mines, rather than their expansion, was in prospect.[2] Recent British immigrants, disappointed and impoverished, began to leave the country. At the end of the month Milner, with Lawley and Duncan,[3] was at grips with the financial position, "a tremendous business," and also "mastering the railway situation, which is very bad" (*Diary*).

The result was communicated to the Secretary of State on December 27. "The immediate prospects," Milner telegraphed, "are very bad. There is complete stagnation owing to the labour difficulty." Faced with a deficit of £350,000 in the Transvaal and Inter-colonial budgets, he urged that payment of the war contribution should be deferred, until normal conditions returned, when the Colony would be perfectly able to fulfil its obligations. But to restore normal conditions, 50,000 extra labourers were necessary. The Home Government agreed (18/1/04) to the postponement of the war debt, and recommended curtailment of expenditure in order to balance the budget. Agreeing with Lyttelton's warning that there were grave objections to increasing the burden already laid upon British taxpayers, by calling upon them to pay the interest of the guaranteed loan, Milner replied (22/1/04) that "a deficit can and must be avoided"; and arranged for a reduction in the South African Constabulary (Cd. 1895).

The last days of the old year witnessed a great debate in the Transvaal Legislative Council on Sir George Farrar's motion asking the Government to prepare an ordinance for the importation of unskilled labour. The result of the debate was striking. The motion was carried by 22 votes, Dutch and English, against 4 (Dec. 30). On reviewing the situation created by that vote, the Governor, Lieutenant-Governor and members of the Executive Council decided to introduce legislation on the lines proposed.

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

3/1/04. . . . I realize the gravity of the decision, but there can be no shadow of doubt as to its wisdom. The depression in business continues daily, people are without work, and unless the

[1] 47,000 signatures. Cd. 1899, No. 2.

[2] Milner Papers, XXXIX, i; LV, v. Cd. 1895, No. 41.

[3] Treasurer and also Colonial Secretary in succession to Mr. Davidson. Mr. W. L. Hichens presently relieved him at the Treasury.

situation soon changes, a considerable exodus of whites is inevitable. The Legislative Council's adoption of the resolution . . . faithfully reflects public opinion. Significant as the vote is, the debate itself is more important. I can remember no discussion in which the weight of argument was more completely on one side. . . .[1]

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

10/3/04. . . . I received this morning a large deputation representing some thirty public bodies and Associations and about forty mines in the Witwatersrand district. Public bodies included Town Councils of Johannesburg, Boksburg, and Germiston, Chambers of Trade and Commerce, Stock Exchange Committee, Prospectors and Claimholders Association, Associations of mine managers, engineers, chartered accountants, surveyors, architects, &c. They asked me to telegraph to you the following Resolution : *Begins* : We desire most earnestly to impress on H.M. Government : (*a*) That it is the interests of the whole community that are at stake, and more especially of the British population engaged in commerce and industry, which are dependent on an adequate supply of coloured labour. (*b*) That so far from the importation of unskilled labour diminishing the employment of whites, it must necessarily augment it. (*c*) That failing the immediate giving effect to the ordinance, an increasing number of white workers will find themselves without the means of livelihood, and the present acute financial and industrial depression will be intensely aggravated. *Ends.* Deputation consisted of several hundred men, about half being delegates from mines and the rest leading professional and commercial men. . . .

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

11/3/04. . . . The deputation was really a remarkable one. It was a genuine popular deputation, half at least being workmen of a fine type, and one of the speeches which were delivered would have carried any workmen's meeting at home.[2] The action of the Chamber of Commerce, too, was noticeable as representing the feeling of the non-mining men of business. This body, a year ago,

[1] Cd. 1895. The debate is there printed at length, pp. 246–315. Cf. 1899, 1941.

[2] One of these working men protested against the misrepresentations at home as unbearable. " I have read the speech of a man who is called Honest John," he said. " This gentleman [Lord Morley] says that the reason we cannot get labour is that the natives are inhumanly treated. I will give that statement the lie direct." . . . Another declared that the unanimous feeling of the mines from which he came was for imported labour. " It has been said that this is a capitalistic question, but I consider it is a working man's question." . . .

decided by a very large majority against imported labour. Yesterday a res ution to take part in the deputation to me was carried at a very full meeting by 61 votes to 11, and the Chairman himself, an anti-importation man, appeared to present it.

The ordinance was sanctioned by the Colonial Office, and passed by the Transvaal Council on February 10. The immense pains which were taken to ensure that it should be so framed as to satisfy public opinion alike in the Transvaal, at home, and in the Australasian Colonies, are reflected in the sheaves of cables which passed between Lyttelton and Milner.[1] It was drawn on the same lines as those which regulated and protected indentured labour in other Colonies.[2] But in this case there were strict provisions limiting the employment of the imported workers to unskilled labour at the Witwatersrand mines, and ensuring their repatriation at the end of their contract. By the end of the year 23,000 Chinese immigrants were at work in the mines.

The result completely justified Milner's insistence upon the measure as the sure and only means for securing the financial and economic recovery of the two new Colonies. The forecast he had made in his letter to Sir H. Just (p. 463) was fulfilled. The financial position was restored; the clouds of depression lifted. By 1906 the output of gold had been doubled, having risen from 12 millions in 1903 to 24 millions, whilst the number of skilled workmen employed in the mines alone rose from 13,000 to 18,000. Native labourers were released for agricultural and constructional work. The interrupted work on roads and railways and the land was resumed, and white immigrants poured into the Transvaal. Already in November, 1904, Milner was able to address an extraordinary meeting of the Inter-colonial Council in these terms:

"The last thing which anyone would have imagined when we dispersed in June was that we should be obliged to call an Extraordinary Meeting in November, merely to sanction the construction

[1] Some are printed in Cd. 1898. The Blue Books on "Chinese Labour" are so full and voluminous that they alone would fill the greater part of this volume. It will be found instructive to read them side by side with the debates in Parliament, Feb. 16–March 24, 1904, and the election literature of 1905. The Blue Books are Cd. 1895, 1898, 1899, 1941, 1945, 1950, 1956, 2025, 2026.

[2] A Liberal Government had sanctioned the British Guiana Ordinance of 1894 for a five-years' term of indentures for Indian coolies. The Liberal Government of 1906 entered into a convention with France for the introduction of indentured labour into the New Hebrides under conditions much less favourable than those provided for the Chinese coolies in South Africa.

of lines which, six months ago, seemed to lie in the distant future. . . . The prospects of the new Colonies, as far as Railway construction is concerned, have certainly changed vastly for the better. And the reason for this change, or what at least seems to me to be the reason, is quite as gratifying as the change itself. It is the revival of confidence in the future of the two new Colonies."

By the end of July the importation of Chinese labour enabled the New Comet Mine to start crushing.

Extract from Despatch. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

29/7/04. . . . The "New Comet" mine started crushing on the 28th instant, being thus the first mine to recommence production as a direct result of the importation of Chinese labour. . . . The question of desertions from the mine has given rise to a certain number of unfounded statements some of which have, as I understand, been cabled to the English newspapers. I am watching the matter very closely, and am satisfied that the total number of deserters at the present time does not exceed three. . . .

In giving assent to the importation of Chinese labour, Lyttelton had been under no illusions as to the political trouble in which the step would involve the Government at home; or of the even less desirable effect it would have upon other parts of the Empire. But he had been convinced by Milner's arguments in November, and was prepared to do what he believed to be necessary in the interests of South Africa. It was Lyttelton who bore the chief burden of defending the measure in Parliament. Neither he nor the Government of which he was a member needs a worthier defence than his own words :—"I am aware that the Government's decision will probably cost the party many votes; but a Government which flinched from what it knew to be necessary in the interests of another part of the Empire, in order to avoid losing some supporters at Home, would not deserve to retain the possession of power."

In England, it was being increasingly realized that everybody had an interest in the activity of the mines. For the stoppage of the flow of gold from South Africa, added to the enormous expenditure upon the war, had seriously affected the exchanges, and added to the cost and difficulty of raising the huge loans required for re-establishing the prosperity of the war-stricken colonies.

But in Parliament, the Opposition saw their opportunity and seized it, even, with the exception of Haldane, those members of

it upon whose continued support Milner had supposed that he could rely (*v.* p. 477). In debates and motions of censure, the champions of immediate self-government for the Transvaal denounced the sanctioning of an ordinance demanded by the inhabitants; they fulminated against Milner as the tool of the mining magnates in supporting that demand. The country was soon being stirred into a frenzy of moral indignation against the ousting of the British working man by "Chinese slavery." The slavery, apparently, consisted in the employment of workmen under clearly defined conditions and definite contracts, freely entered into by them, and at wages which appealed to them as a sufficient inducement; but "slavery" because they were restricted in their residence whilst in South Africa, and agreed to return home when their contract was concluded. The very precautions, in fact, which were taken to prevent the evils of introducing competitive labour and another coloured race into South Africa, were proclaimed as crimes against the moral law. Politicians will be politicians; but in the whole history of party warfare there is not to be found anything more cynical and disgusting than the speeches, backed by banners and cartoons of flogged and fettered Chinamen, by which the anti-Chinese agitation was worked up in Parliament, the Press, the Chapel and the street corner, by right reverend prelates and nonconformist divines, by Hyde Park orators, and right honourable gentlemen who themselves sanctioned similar restrictions on indented labour elsewhere (*v.* p. 484, note 2). They were all the more effective, and all the more unforgiveable, because they were a deliberate exploitation of one of the most just and generous instincts of the British people.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

21/2/04. [PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL] . . . This week I should have written, in any case, to thank you for what you have done for us about the Labour question. Evidently the situation at home with regard to it was extremely difficult. You were right and I was wrong as to the amount of trouble you were likely to have over it in Parliament. All the more cause have we to be grateful to you for making so strong and successful a fight. . . .

In the House of Lords the Bishop of Hereford, Dr. Percival, moved an adjournment (March 18), and made a violent attack upon Milner, for which he received a severe trouncing from Lord Goschen and others.

Extract from Letter. Lord Goschen to Lord Milner.

25/3/04. . . . Well, we have had a time over the Chinese Labour question. Such rows, and such battles over your body! All your critics became frantic, and I think have damaged themselves by their frightful extravagance. No one worse than the Bishop of Hereford, who was disgracefully violent, and gave me the opportunity of giving him such a dressing as I expect no Bishop has had for years in the House of Lords. . . .

Extract from Letter. The Rt. Rev. A. Hamilton Baynes, Bishop of Natal,[1] *to Lord Milner.*

23/3/04. . . . Some people in England are very difficult to understand, for they seem to think that as soon as men come abroad to the Colonies, they lose all sense of what is right and just. You probably by this time are fairly hardened to criticism and abuse. And perhaps, at least I hope that, such things do not worry you much. At the same time when a man's high name and character are attacked, it is bound to sting to some degree. I can only assure you, as you are already I think aware, that you have our entire confidence and respect. And we in this country know something of the difficulties with which you have had to contend. And we know too with what high-minded conscientiousness you have always tried to act. We resent very deeply such an attack as seems to have been made upon you personally by the Bishop of Hereford; for we know that the grounds, upon which the attack was made, are absolutely without foundation. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Bishop Hamilton Baynes.

28/3/04. . . . Don't be anxious about the Chinese Question. I will not even admit as much as that Chinese Labour is in itself undesirable. There is an immense amount of cant about the "moral" evils attending Chinese immigration. The men who know them best assure me that the Chinese are not, as a race, at all particularly immoral. As for "slavery," there is no more slavery in this than in a hundred forms of service, based upon free contract—certainly not as much as in ordinary enlistment in the Army. It is true, mining is not a healthy trade, but it will be carried on under conditions as favourable as Science can make them, and in all other respects the Chinese will be well cared for. They can earn here in a few years as much as they could at home in a lifetime, and will return to their own country with what to them appears a competency, and even wealth. And this country absolutely requires some extraneous help to get along. Without

[1] Now Assistant Bishop of Birmingham.

it, there will be a white exodus, and that, of course, means a British exodus. And this, I am perfectly certain, is the reason why Chinese Labour is so much opposed. It is the pro-Boers and Little Englanders, who are really at the bottom of the whole business, though they are leading the bulk of their well-meaning ignorant countrymen by the nose. To say that Chinese Labour is *a substitution for white labour* is, quite simply, a lie, and those who have raised the clamour know that it is a lie. But it has taken in thousands of people. The exact opposite is the truth. Without a substratum of coloured labour, white labour cannot exist here, and when the very rich mines are worked out, the country will return to its primitive barrenness—and to the Boer. And that is the true inwardness of the whole business. . . .

CHAPTER XIV

The Last Year

MILNER had now entered upon the last year of his administration in South Africa. There was to be no relaxation from the high pressure at which he worked in guiding the destinies of the new South Africa created under his High Commissionership.

With unremitting care he watched over the governments of the new Colonies. Apart from the task of providing native labour, described in the foregoing chapter, there were innumerable minor branches of development which needed his guiding hand and stimulating influence. Larger questions of the first importance made immense demands upon his time and energy. Chief among them were the supervision of the finances; the re-organization of Railway Administration; and the distribution of the Imperial forces. Questions connected with Education, too, Native policy, Compensation claims, and Land settlement, all called for thought and counsel and decision.

In dealing with all these matters, Milner laboured under a growing sense of urgency. None of them admitted of postponement. It was evident to him that the sands were running out. Not only was he exhausting both his own strength, and, inevitably, his immense popularity, in the task of driving men and measures at break-neck speed, but at home also the Unionist Government was patently drawing to an end of its existence. The demand for self-government was growing in the new Colonies, both among the followers of the Boer leaders and among the British population. It was certain that when the Liberal Government came into office, self-government would be promptly granted, if only as a method of escaping from the difficulty created by the "Chinese Slavery" agitation. Therefore, the preparation of an interim Constitution, as a preliminary step towards the granting of complete self-government, became yet another urgent task for Milner and Lyttelton.

"Pace," Milner wrote to Mr. Ramsay Collins (19/4/04), "is

everything. It is obvious that, if terrible troubles between the Colonies and the Mother Country are to be averted, we must get self-government in the new Colonies soon. And yet too soon is also dangerous. We must increase the British population first. . . . We cannot afford to risk the experiment of self-government in the Orange River Colony and Transvaal under conditions which make a most bitter Boer Government in the former a certainty, and a Boer Government of sorts a probability even in the latter. . . ."

Milner's sense of urgency was increased by the "paralysis of progress," which had fallen upon the country owing to the shortage of labour, and which made the importation of Chinese coolies vital not only to the gold industry, but also to the reconstruction of the new Colonies. Slowing down in the working of the mines had resulted in industrial depression on the Rand. Both were reflected in a serious falling off in the railway revenue. Reviewing the situation in an opening address to the March session of the Inter-colonial Council, Milner was led to emphasize the importance of hastening the production of the mines, and to formulate his governing theory of the "over-spill":

"My point is that, even in these bad times, there is still a big traffic, and a big industry attracting that traffic, and that it is not absolute destitution which is the matter with us, or which is the cause of our present gloom. It is the paralysis of the progress which ails us, a paralysis all the more galling to a community which has always been used, and having regard to its resources, and, in all but one respect, its capacities, is fully entitled to expect, to be ever moving forward. The way in which that paralysis affects the Government is this: The Government has means enough to carry on its ordinary business. But in a country situated as the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal at present are, that is not nearly enough. All young communities need the help of Government in the development of their resources. These colonies, for reasons which it would take too long to go into, but which can easily be expanded, need that help in an exceptional degree, even for young communities. They are extraordinarily deficient in those aids to the development of their natural resources which, in the absence of great stores of private wealth, such as exist only in an old country, the Government has alone the power to supply. At the same time they are, for physical and other reasons, exceptionally in need of such assistance.

Under these circumstances, it is peculiarly foolish for the

wiseacres overseas who know our business so much better than we know it ourselves, to say: 'Oh, it does not matter whether you get out your gold quickly or slowly. It won't run away.' It does matter enormously, at what pace we get it out. Conceivably, if there were not so much of it, we might get it out too fast. But under the actual circumstances, we cannot get it out too fast, because in any case the supply will last for many years, and that being so, the faster we get it the greater is the over-spill, if I may use that word, over what is in any case necessary to remunerate the capital invested, and it is that over-spill which benefits the local community and fills the coffers of the State, and can be used for the general advantage of the country. And by the general advantage I mean especially the development, aye and the creation, of those other resources which should make and keep South Africa a great and flourishing country when the gold is gone. The faster the gold is won, the sooner will you be able to build up those permanent sources of wealth which will make you independent of the gold, and which, if you won the gold too slowly, you might never have the means of building up at all. From a business point of view, the difference between £10,000 a year for the next hundred years and £20,000 a year for the next hundred years is enormous. It is especially great where capital is rapidly reproductive, and it is mere foolishness to say that it does not matter whether you get the one or the other" (*v.* Cd. 2102, pp. 17–37).

In addition to Government aid for settlers, some large and beneficent schemes of land settlements for ex-soldiers were undertaken at this time by patriotic men of standing, including the Duke of Westminster, Lord Lovat, Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, and Sir John Gilmour.

In recommending to the Duke of Westminster a scheme inaugurated by Sir Herbert Baker, for establishing a furniture-making industry on the Duke's estate beyond Thaba 'Nchu, Milner added: (24/1/04) "In my opinion there is nothing which would more assist Land Settlement than the introduction of rural industries. The difficulty about such industries is that nowadays they are generally of a more or less artificial order. But this furniture-making business of Baker's is not open to that objection. The taste for really good furniture in the old Dutch style, such as he has introduced, has now caught on, if I may use the phrase, in South Africa, and there can be no doubt whatever that it is real good commercial business, and will support a larger

number of people than those whom Baker has already started in it in Cape Colony. . . . I am extremely interested in your land scheme and most eager to see it succeed. . . . We have now got between 500 and 600 people—British men—on the land in the Orange River Colony under the Government system. With a few exceptions they are all doing well, though they had an awful season to start with. I hope to see an equal number placed on the land within the next twelve months. This is something, but in order to make the movement a real big thing, which would materially affect the character of the population of the country and its political future, it is necessary that private enterprise should back up the Government undertaking. So far yours is the only important assistance we have had from private sources. Of course there are not many men in the position to take up a thing of this kind; but there are some. I wish you could inspire a few to follow your example. If the thing caught on, there is no reason why we should not, in the course of ten years, have between 5,000 and 10,000 British settlers on the land in the new Colonies, and that would settle the political question. The towns and industrial centres are British. . . ."

In January, Milner visited the Rand agricultural districts, with the object of learning from their own lips the views and difficulties of the farmers, Dutch and English alike. In February (15th and 22nd) he composed two elaborate despatches, giving a complete statement of the financial position of the two Colonies, and of expenditure out of the Guaranteed Loan (Milner Papers, XXVIII, iii).

In March a despatch to the Secretary of State summarized the results of much correspondence, advisory and supervisory, on the administrative and financial details of Land Settlement in the Transvaal.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Doyle.

JOHANNESBURG. 26/3/04. . . . I saw a letter in the *Leader* yesterday from one of the Springbok Flats Settlers, complaining of the lack of postal arrangements. You may remember that this was one of the things about which they spoke to me when I saw them on the spot. I should like you to take some opportunity of letting them know that I have not forgotten about it. I have been worrying the P.M.G. on the matter. I feel confident that some arrangement will soon be made. But these arrangements take some time. It would be a pity if people thought that any

matters which they brought especially to my attention did not receive consideration. Therefore, I attach some importance to it that the settlers having had my promise that I would look into the matter, should know that I have been, and am, doing so. Another thing which they were very keen about, and in which I promised to help them, was the matter of water bores. I have kept on worrying the Land Department about this, and I believe that it is being attended to. But it would be a satisfaction to my mind to know that at least one bore was actually at work on Springbok Flats. I hope you will let me know when this is the case. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir Hamilton Goold-Adams.

1/11/04. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . After long struggles, I have succeeded in getting our Conservatives at Pretoria to agree to the appointment of an Irrigation Committee. . . . What I want you to consider is, whether it would not be better to have one Commissioner for the two Colonies, as the conditions are much the same. I should greatly prefer this, as one of the most important assets of both Colonies is the Vaal, and there must be co-operation in the use of it. [*Discusses personnel* of a Commission of three members from each Colony under the Presidency of Judge Wessels of the Transvaal High Court. . . . *Continues:* . . .] I want the Commission . . . to have a majority of men on it, who *really mean to do something*. . . . The great difficulty is that few people have the least conception what is meant by really scientific irrigation, or what an enormous amount we lose annually by neglecting it. Farmers are frightened because they think systematic irrigation means invasion of private rights; lawyers are hostile because (1) they are all Tories by nature, and (2) they reap a most profitable harvest from the present bad system or want of system. Therefore, there are great difficulties in the way, and it means faith and energy to overcome them. But the prize is great. What do you say to it? . . . [Sir Hamilton Goold-Adams expressed his entire approval of a Joint Commission.]

In the matter of railways and finance, Milner fought a long battle on behalf of the Colonies, against the claim of the War Office for one and a half millions on account of capital expenditure on the lines during the war. This claim he characterized as "preposterous," and had been fighting ever since it was made. In the end, it was settled for £500,000. He also engaged in a lengthy correspondence with the Treasury over its refusal to allow the issue of the remaining 5 millions of the Guaranteed Loan until the

first instalment of the war contribution should have been received. In this he was at last successful (June 25, 1904. Cd. 2102, p. 53).

In August, in reply to a request from Lyttelton (14/4/04), for a "brief" on finance,[1] showing its relation to his ultimate objects, Milner stated (28/8/04) that with the advent of the Chinese labourers, he could now look forward to a satisfactory situation, so far as the budget and revenue were concerned. But with regard to the Capital and Loan problem, upon which the foundation of his policy for the two new Colonies was based, out of the 35 millions loan there had been excess expenditure, both on getting the old railways into working order, and on Repatriation, so that after allowing for "the iniquitous claim of the War Office for 1½ millions," excess expenditure had so encroached upon the 10 millions earmarked for development, that there remained little over six millions for that purpose, although in Milner's view, the ten millions had never been nearly enough. Disappointed, owing to the trade depression, of further contributions from the revenue, Milner explained to Lyttelton that they were left with not nearly enough money for Land Settlement and Railway extension purposes, and that "it would be simply disastrous, if what we still have were taken away. We could with difficulty complete enterprises already begun. Everything else, including two railways, which have been promised over and over again, would have to be abandoned. The whole thing would be a pitiable fiasco." He begged, therefore, once more for a prompt and equitable settlement of the War Office claim, whilst arguing that the Loan, having been sanctioned to provide for certain fixed amounts allocated to purposes defined in the schedule, it would be definitely illegal as well as impolitic to rob the development fund to pay overdrafts on the other funds. To meet the calls on the Capital account without crippling enterprise for development, he suggested that any excess over the sum allotted for the acquisition of the railways should be met by a short terminable annuity payable out of Inter-colonial revenue; that the debt to the War Office for repatriation supplies should be paid

[1] Milner Papers, XLI, v, 43–59. "I know the business is so enormous . . . and so complicated," he wrote to Lyttelton about this (9/5/04), "that I do not wonder if anybody is fairly bewildered by it. I wish you were sitting in that adjacent chair to cross-examine me. For I know it from A to Z without looking at a paper . . ." This was no idle boast. So complete, indeed, was his grasp of his subject, and so intimate his familiarity with figures, that Milner usually made his financial statements to the Inter-Colonial Council without the aid of a note.

gradually, as receipts for them were settled ; and that a million pounds should be raised by the sale of public assets, or a short loan raised locally on them, to settle the still outstanding claims of ex-burghers.

Largely as the result of laudable endeavours to comply with the public demand to deliver " perfection by return of post," as Milner put it, railway achievement and administration under Col. Sir Percy Girouard had fallen short of the ideal. It was felt that a halt must be called in the interests of economy, and that the whole problem must be overhauled by a stronger Railway Committee. Milner preferred to work through the Inter-colonial Council, and set his face against an independent Commission.

" If," he wrote to Sir George Farrar (3/3/04), in a letter which indicates the angle from which he approached administrative problems, " it is general business capacity we want, then there is as good on the Council as off it. Why was the Council created ? In order to give me, a non-expert, the help of business men in these very questions. Well, then, let them give it. The real weakness is that *there are not enough of them on the Council.* The quality is as good as any, the quantity is insufficient. The remedy, therefore, is to *strengthen the Council in business men,* and out of that strengthened Council to appoint a much stronger Railway Committee. . . . The difficulty is that both Council and Committee are rigidly fixed by Order in Council. But if we were to agree as to their enlargement, I have no doubt H.M. Government would consent, even by telegram, to an enlargement of the Committee, pending the issue of an Order in Council which could reconstitute the Council itself in plenty of time for the next ordinary Meeting. . . ."

A despatch, dated March 21, informed the Secretary of State of the recent proceedings of the Inter-colonial Council (March 1–9), and the difficulties which had arisen over Railway administration. In it Milner supported the unanimous desire of the Council for the admission of more non-official members. This was promptly sanctioned (April 21, Cd. 2104), and the first meeting of the enlarged Council assembled in May to consider future railway policy. Resolutions were passed for rearranging the financial control of the railways, and requesting the High Commissioner to institute necessary reforms in railway administration, and also to obtain the amendment of the Order in Council, which such reorganization would require. This involved the retirement of the Commissioner of Railways (Sir Percy Girouard).

During the preceding months Milner had been in constant correspondence with the Governors of Natal and the Cape Colony. As the result, he was able to announce at the opening of this session (31/5/04) that the two self-governing Colonies were agreed in desiring a deliberative Conference with representatives of the Central South African Railways, to consider the joint management of the three systems. Milner also placed before the Council his own views as to the policy which should be pursued in railway construction. "We begin," he said, "to see the end of the funds available for railway construction out of the Guaranteed Loan. These funds may suffice, after the completion of the lines already in progress, to complete the connection between Harrismith and Viljoen's Drift, and to connect the Rand with the rich agricultural districts of the Western Transvaal. But even if this is done, there will still be a great extent of country almost totally devoid of means of communication. . . . What is to be done? Some people will say 'Nothing.' There is, I know, a large body of opinion—I do not wish to underestimate the strength of it, or the reasonableness of the arguments adduced—which is opposed to a forward policy in this matter. It is said that we are in danger of throwing away money on lines which will never pay, and that we shall be benefiting the country at the expense of the towns, which already have to bear the chief burden of taxation. Why should industry and commerce make these sacrifices on behalf of agriculture, or the great urban centres come to the support of remote agricultural districts? Well, why should the heart, with great effort, pump blood to the extremities? We are one body politic. But apart from such, it may be said, sentimental considerations, it is good business, in the long run, to increase your agricultural resources as well as to extend the area of industrial development. Of course, no one in his senses would advocate any and every suggested branch line. But a steady and gradual improvement of the means of communication is, it seems to me, as essential to the welfare of the towns as to the country itself. There are branch lines which may not pay directly, but will pay indirectly, not only by increasing the profitable traffic of the main lines, but by bringing business to the towns—the farmer who is enabled to sell produce, which he now cannot sell, will then be a customer for goods which he now cannot buy—and by cheapening the cost of living.

We hear a great deal nowadays about the necessity of reducing that cost, and certainly it is one of our vital problems. Many

causes, some irremovable, contribute to the dearness of living in our inland towns, and many remedial measures must co-operate before we can greatly reduce it. But, after all, one of the chief causes is the comparative unproductiveness of vast areas of the country, some of which, at any rate, are capable of most profitable production. But that reproach can never be removed until there is a great improvement in communications. No doubt, where any new line of railway is only a development line, only a feeder, and can never form a link in some great chain of communication, there is every reason to construct it in the cheapest possible manner. But it is one thing to argue that such lines ought to be made in the most inexpensive manner, and another to lay it down that, unless there is a direct profit to be got out of them, they should not be made at all. After all, roads yield no direct profit, yet no civilized country dispenses with them on that account. . . ."

Fortunately, the change wrought in the financial situation by the introduction of Chinese Labour was so marked and rapid, that in the following November it was possible to summon an extraordinary session of the Inter-colonial Council to meet at Bloemfontein, in order to sanction the construction of new lines. In his opening address, Milner exhorted the members of the Council to consider the proposed new lines not merely as they might affect their own Colony or their neighbours, but as they might contribute to the general advantage of South Africa. He recommended the new lines as calculated to "fill up some of the most flagrant gaps in the railway map of South Africa," and by so doing, not only to benefit one particular district, but also remove one of the great obstacles to union. "We talk of South African unity. We all desire it. But perhaps we do not consider how greatly it is of necessity impeded by purely physical difficulties, by the immense distances which separate the principal centres, and which, unless bridged by a more rational system of communications, prevent that easy and constant intercourse, that interweaving of interests, and, more important still, that free exchange of ideas, which are so important in the growth of national life and national sentiment."

Meanwhile much had been done to prepare the way for agreement at the Railway Amalgamation Conference, which Milner had announced in his address in May. The High Commissioner had conducted negotiations with Portugal for the removal of a grievance entertained by the coastal Colonies against the *modus vivendi* [1]

[1] Cd. 2104, Appendix.

arranged by him in 1901 with the Province of Mozambique (Portuguese East Africa). Before the introduction of Chinese labour, Mozambique was supplying more than three-quarters of the African labour employed by the Transvaal. The power of granting or withholding permission to recruit natives within her territory, therefore, gave to Portugal practically a monopoly power in bargaining. In the *modus vivendi* by which Milner obtained this vital permission, he was obliged to agree to continue the Treaty of 1875, which guaranteed free trade between Mozambique and the Transvaal in the produce and manufactures of both countries, and also to maintain railway rates on goods from the ports of the coastal Colonies at a figure calculated to secure to Delagoa Bay a fair proportion of the Transvaal overseas trade.

As between the Transvaal and Mozambique, it was by no means a one-sided arrangement. For, as Milner always pointed out, the interests of the two were largely identical. Delagoa Bay was the natural port of the Transvaal; its development and prosperity were therefore to the interest of both. The difficulty lay in apportioning to it a sufficient share of the Rand traffic, without injuring the ports and railways of Natal and the Cape Colony.

Milner had visited the Governor-General of Mozambique, August 11–13, 1902, leaving for Delagoa Bay the day after he had held the Coronation Parade at Johannesburg (August 9). The visit was returned in November (20–22). On the first of these occasions, Milner had expressed his desire to co-operate with Mozambique commercially and without any suggestion of that political interference, of which the Portuguese authorities were suspicious. He obtained a reduction of the transit duty upon goods carried to the new Colonies, and at his invitation, a Portuguese delegate attended the Customs Union Conference in 1903. But so far as the coastal Colonies were concerned, the effect of the *modus vivendi*, confirmed in the Customs Convention, threatened to be the admission through Delagoa Bay of uncustomed goods, which in their own ports were liable to import duties under the Customs Convention. Milner therefore entered into negotiations with the Portuguese. It was agreed (June, 1904) that the right of free entry of manufactured goods should be restricted to those " wholly or chiefly manufactured from the produce of the soil of Mozambique " (Cd. 2104). The adjustment of the amount of the through-carrying trade of the Rand to be reserved for Delagoa Bay, so as to satisfy the Portuguese without undue loss to the British Colonies, was a

more perplexing problem. As Milner explained to the Natal and Cape Governments, the Transvaal could not afford to quarrel with Portugal, nor indeed could they. They must bargain with her.

As soon as he had made the above arrangement as to manufactured goods coming from Mozambique, Milner invited the Governors and Railway Ministers of Natal and the Cape Colony to Johannesburg (June 26), in order to discuss informally with them what the terms of that bargain should be. Could they agree among themselves upon a "common offer" to be made to Portugal?

The coastal Colonies were anxious to lower the rates on goods from their ports, in order to check the movement of traffic to Delagoa Bay. As a way of satisfying Portugal, Milner suggested that such lowering of rates from British ports should be accompanied by an assignment to Delagoa Bay of a definite amount of the through traffic. But such a solution could only be arrived at after the British railway system had agreed to pool its receipts, and had obtained statistics upon which to base the adjustment of rates and the proportion of traffic to be so assigned. Consideration of this problem was the main business of the Railway Amalgamation Conference.

After Milner had approached the Portuguese authorities, who not unnaturally proved disinclined to surrender the preference enjoyed by the Delagoa Bay route, the Conference met at Johannesburg on February 2 in the following year. It was attended by delegates from Mozambique. Milner presided. He had explained in his address in May that, recognizing the many difficulties in the way of amalgamation, it would not be surprising if the first discussion of the subject did not lead to an agreement. "But," he continued, "what it must lead to, and that in itself will be a great advantage, is the placing of this big problem—in all its aspects, the advantages to be gained by amalgamation, and at the same time the extent of the mutual concessions which it involves—in a clear light before the eyes of the public. At present the discussion of it is absolutely chaotic. The most elementary facts are in dispute. Each party sees only its own side of the question. Even where there exists the disposition, there does not exist the material which would enable men to judge it as a whole. The Conference may not produce agreement, but it must promote enlightenment, and that in itself is a great step forward. . . . The Conference will be a completely open one. The question to be put to the Conference will practically be no other than this: 'Can we work

together, and, if so, in what manner, and on what terms?'" (Cd. 2104). This, in effect, was what the Amalgamation Conference did achieve. Its results were briefly summarized in the following letter :

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. G. Adamson.

9/2/05. [PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL] . . . As I anticipated, the practical results of the discussion were not great. I think everybody present was impressed by the endless difficulties—the loss to the public as well as the ceaseless causes of friction between the several Colonies—arising from the present divided ownership of the State Railways of South Africa ; and at the end a resolution was unanimously passed in favour of common management and pooling of receipts. This is, of course, purely platonic, as it is one thing to decide upon pooling receipts in principle, and quite another to solve the great crux of pooling receipts, which lies in the basis upon which profits are to be divided. That is a crux which none of us felt inclined to tackle, and which, indeed, would require a Conference, not of three or four days, but of as many weeks to solve. At the same time, however, I do not think that that general resolution is without value, as it points to the road along which we shall ultimately have to travel. As regards the immediate question of the difference of rates between Delagoa Bay and the other ports, there was an enormous amount of discussion, resulting in what appeared to me personally as a very fair compromise. What the facts clearly point to is, that the preference which Delagoa Bay at present enjoys is an excessive preference, and that there is nothing in the comparative cost of working the various routes to justify it, and that it is artificially diverting trade from British Ports to the Portuguese Port. On the other hand, it is equally clear that *some* preference to Delagoa Bay is justified. The point on which the discussion principally turned is, what degree of preference Delagoa Bay should continue to retain? Ultimately, the majority of the Conference recommended certain changes in the through-rates—all in the nature of reductions—which would bring the rates from the other ports nearer to the Delagoa Bay rates, without bringing them down to those rates. And it was decided that the Governments of the British Colonies should collectively approach the Government of Mozambique with a view to an agreement which, without altering the *modus vivendi*, would allow of the British ports charging somewhat lower rates than they do at present, so as to diminish the excessive advantage enjoyed by Delagoa Bay. . . . (Cf. Cd. 2482.)

Federation and Imperialism.

The effect of Milner's initiative in securing the co-operation of the several Colonies through Inter-colonial Councils and Commissions was not confined to material results, great though they were. Far-reaching and beneficial, indeed, were the construction of railways in reducing the cost of living and promoting the accessibility of markets, and the financial saving of united administration and reductions of rates. But more important still, perhaps, was the accustoming of South African statesmen to approach the divergent interests of coastal and inland Colonies, or agriculture, or the shipping combine, or the large problem of Native affairs, from the point of view of the whole. Stimulated by Milner's constant exhortations, their minds were opened through these conferences to the conception of working to common ends, transcending the provincialism which had hitherto been a drag upon South African progress. Practically and psychologically, they proved safe and sure steps towards the union which had for so long been the ideal of British statesmen.

Not that Milner thought that there was any immediate prospect of a Union of South Africa, or indeed, that it was wise to hasten the establishment of a Federal Government, before it was quite certain that it would not fall into the hands of those who were opposed to the Imperial connection.[1] Federation was not to be hurried.

In returning thanks for an Address of welcome from the Bloemfontein Town Council, he made the following significant allusion to his view of the future :

(25/1/04). " . . . In a sense there can be no speedy accomplishment of the objects for which I have laboured since I came to South Africa, and for which I am still labouring. My work has been constantly directed to a great and distant end—the establishment in South Africa of a great and civilized and progressive community, one from Cape Town to the Zambesi—independent in the management of its own affairs, but still remaining, from its own firm desire, a member of the great community of free nations gathered together under the British flag. That has been the object of all my efforts. It is my object still ; but I don't consider that is an object which can be accomplished in a short time. It may take years ; it may take far longer than is generally supposed.

[1] Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton. Despatch on the Constitution. May 2, 1905.

In any case, I am not sanguine enough to anticipate that it can possibly come in my time, and, indeed, when you consider all the difficulties which have to be got over, while there is no reason to despair of the ultimate attainment of that end, I think more harm than good is done by expecting to see it come sooner than it possibly can come. Impatience is one of the commonest forms of human error, and it is perhaps natural there should be more impatience in new countries than in old ones. I have learned to be very patient; and I don't expect to see the accomplishment of my hopes during my residence in South Africa, or perhaps during my lifetime. It is sufficient for me if I can carry away with me the conviction that, in all I have done, I have laboured towards that end—and then trust to a higher Power for the accomplishment of that end, perhaps long after. . . ."

But Milner looked beyond Federation, beyond a united South Africa, to an ampler vista of United Empire. A few months later, in an address to the Navy League at Johannesburg, he defined what Imperialism meant to him, anticipating in some degree the famous passage in his great farewell speech (p. 547). Imperialism, for him, was as far from implying the domination of Great Britain over the Colonies, as was his conception of the settlement of South Africa from implying domination of one white race over the other, whether British over Dutch, or Dutch over British. Milner, one may claim, was the first British statesman to adopt the conception of an Empire which transcends the countries or races of which it is composed; an organic union of States to which the citizens of each free and independent part owe a wider and prior patriotism.

In his speech to the Navy League (28/5/04), Milner associated himself with the view then expressed by Sir George Farrar, that in the contributions of the Colonies to the Navy lay the germ of a Federation of the Empire. "I sincerely hope," he continued, "that when the time comes, you will" [as a self-governing Colony] "come forward with a contribution, but also with the demand to have a voice in controlling the Navy, as well as contributing money for its support. And that not for your own sake, but for the sake of all of us, for the sake of the whole great, scattered, disorganized British race—that great race which is possessed of so great a desire for unity and co-operation, and yet has hitherto been so far from finding the proper means, the proper organization, to give practical effect to this desire. Let us realize

the fact that mere scattered paltry contributions—and even those contributions which are not paltry—if they only mean handing over a certain sum of money, will not be all we mean to do. We want not only that in money all parts of the Empire should contribute to the Navy, but that the Navy we contribute to should be absolutely as much the Navy of South Africa, as much the Navy of Australia, as much the Navy of Canada, as it is the Navy of Great Britain. . . .

I am an Imperialist out and out—and by an Imperialist I don't mean that which is commonly supposed to be indicated by that word. It is not the domination of Great Britain over the other parts of the Empire that is in my mind when I call myself an Imperialist out and out. I am an Englishman, but I am an Imperialist more than an Englishman, and I am prepared to see the Federal Council of the Empire sitting at Ottawa, in Sydney, in South Africa—sitting anywhere—if in the great future we can only all hold together. That may be looking very far ahead, but it is the only right ideal in this matter. Nothing else is really of any use at all, and therefore it is not only because of the immediate value of the Navy, not only because of its great achievements and traditions—which we can never think of without a glow of pride—but because it is as a political instrument [? *able*] to bring about, if anything can bring about, that effective, live, organic union of all the scattered members of our race, that I am an enthusiast for the Navy. . . ."

In working for the closer co-operation of the several States, Milner was helped by the turn of events in the Cape Colony. The new Government worked in harmony with Natal, where Hime and Maydon were the ruling spirits, in furthering the general policy of the High Commissioner. For when the Progressives came into power in February, they had in Dr. Jameson a Prime Minister who, as became the devoted disciple of Cecil Rhodes, was keenly anxious to win to the goal of Federation, towards which he had led them. He could not, however, move so quickly as he would have wished ; nor was Milner at all satisfied that the success of the Progressives at the polls had not been too dearly bought, and that suspension of the Constitution would not have been the wiser policy. He thought that the persistence in party government had revived race antagonism, and that racialism, which might have died down under a neutral administration, was firmly rooted for years to come. Even early in 1933 events seemed to confirm his views.

Extract from Letter. Dr. (Sir Starr) Jameson to Lord Milner.

26/2/04. . . . I am still debating whether to make any move in the way of a Federation Commission in the coming session, and will be a good deal guided by what you say after seeing Montague Bell. Should like to make the move, but of course our own party are not even solid on that. . . .

Extract from Letter. Dr. Jameson to Lord Milner.

16/3/04. . . . Montague Bell has given the results of his conversation with you on the Federation question, and I shall follow your practical advice, and pending the introduction of the subject in Parliament will shortly write you the Cape view as to general lines after consultation with Smartt and McEwan. Thank you very much for your kind forethought in leaving an opening for the Cape, even before our success at the polls was an accomplished fact. We are going to have a tough session and pass nothing except at the point of the bayonet, at all events until the Additional Representation Bill is through. . . .

Extract from Letter. Col. [Sir Charles] Crewe [1] *to Lord Milner.*

19/4/04. . . . I think the Additional Representation Bill will go through the Upper House now safely enough. I am sure you will have been pleased with our success. Jameson has been admirable as a leader, and has won golden opinions from friend and foe. I think now the future of the Cape Colony may be looked upon as assured, and we shall be able generally to help on in South Africa. To you we all owe the thanks for all this, and I for one feel the Empire and South Africa can never show you sufficient gratitude. . . .

Extract from Letter. Rudyard Kipling to Lord Milner.

The Woolsack, Nr. Cape Town. 4/4/04. . . . I am leaving for England and write to ask you if there is anything in which I can be of any service in England. Things are going not so badly here. The Bond has been hurt in the House which it dislikes; has made itself ridiculous also, and is quarrelling now among itself . . . in vituperating triangles. What is more, the Progressives have discovered that they are really being led by their leader, and that he means to continue to lead them. Meantime his studious urbanity is driving the Dutch wild, and they are working hard, as one Dutch woman said the other day, "to remove any good impression that Dr. Jameson may make." I take it

[1] Colonial Secretary in the new Government.

that the iron repression and self-effacement of the past seven years will bear a good fruit. But to think that after such a war we should be rejoicing here to have defeated "constitutionally" the declared aims of declared rebels! . . . What a land it is! And what a hell of a time we have laboriously arranged for ourselves! I congratulate you on the plague. Otherwise you might not have been certain that the last straw had been laid on your burden. . . . (*v.* p. 509).

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir Clinton Dawkins.

11/4/04. . . . So far from the present condition of . . . the Cape . . . being an argument against suspension, it is the strongest argument for it. . . . You have had to stir up all the old racial animosities, which under an impartial loyal govt. (not depending on elections, election violence, election dodges and the race hatred which electioneering excites to the highest pitch) would by now have been dying down. At the end of the war there were plenty of Dutchmen who, if they had not been forced at once to side for or against "*the national* cause" at the polls, would have been only too glad to live peaceably with their British neighbours under a neutral administration, which would have had no temptation to stir up race animosity and hound English against Dutch. What you have got now, under your blessed responsible Govt., is what every man knowing the country foresaw you must have, i.e. parties, almost equally matched, fighting for power *on the race issue alone*, and the race feud firmly rooted for years, when you had a golden chance of eradicating it. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir Lewis Michell.

13/5/04. [PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL] . . . "A qui le dîtes -vous?" There is not one word in your letter, recounting the beauties and perfections of Parliamentary party-govt., which I have not repeated to myself *every day* all these years that I have been, not indeed a Member of Parliament, but a sufferer from the mischievous attentions of Parliaments, great and small. Representative Govt. has its merits, no doubt, but the influence of representative assemblies, organized on the party system, upon administration—"government" in the true sense of the word—is almost uniformly bad. As you say, the wonder is (and it *is* a wonder . . .) not that we are badly governed, but that we are not much worse governed; not that the Empire staggers on so shakily, and with so many setbacks, but that it continues to exist at all. If I had time, I could overflow on this subject with many "quaint saws and modern instances" for a whole month. . . . I watch the

movements of Cape Politics with the deepest interest, and sincerely trust you may get through all right. It makes *just the whole difference* to the S. African situation to have a loyal government at the Cape. Jameson seems to make an admirable leader. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. F. H. Congdon (in reply to an offer of the Presidentship of the Imperial Federalist Organization).

23/11/04. . . . This is the first chance I have had for years of real recuperation, and, unless I avail myself of it, I shall never be the least use any more. I mean to do so fully, and that means to put myself, for a time at least, beyond the reach of all political work and engagements of any kind whatsoever. I have never been able to do anything by halves. . . . Personally I have no political interest worth mentioning, except the maintenance of the Imperial connection ; and I look upon the future with alarm. The party system at home and in the Colonies seems to me to work for the severance of ties, and that contrary to the desire of our people on both sides. It is a melancholy instance of the manner in which bad political arrangements, lauded to the skies from year's end to year's end as the best in the world, may not only injure the interests, but actually frustrate the desires of the people. I can see no remedy or protection, under present circumstances, except a powerful body of men—and it would have to be very powerful—determined at all times and under all circumstances to vote and work, regardless of every other consideration, against the man or party who played fast and loose with the cause of National Unity. You can be sure that for my own part I shall always do that. . . .

In June Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson went home on leave. He had, as Milner bore testimony, proved a successful Governor, tactful and conciliatory in a most difficult post (Milner Papers, XLII, i, 51).

Extract from Letter. Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson to Lord Milner.

14/6/04. . . . Thanks for your generous letter. . . . My main difficulty has been to be conciliatory and fair to the Dutch people and yet retain the confidence of the loyalists. I should never have managed it, if it had not been for you. . . . I hope it may be my lot to work with you so long as you consent to stay in South Africa ; and I only wish that it were in my power to help you more. You are fighting with devils, but you will overcome them—at the top of the Hill Difficulty lies the House Beautiful. . . .

The Garrison

Under pressure from the Treasury, the British Garrison in South Africa had been reduced from the agreed establishment of 30,000 to 25,000 ; it was reduced again, in spite of Milner's protests, in Feb., 1904. Milner could only then devote himself to planning in conjunction with General Lyttelton, a scheme for the best possible distribution of the troops that remained.

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

20/7/04. I regret deeply the proposed withdrawal of the garrison battalions. A large proportion would, I have every reason to think, have settled here, and would have been a most valuable addition to the British population. Of course, it was essential to their success as settlers that they should be retained with the colours for some time, to give them a chance of becoming familiar with the country, and opportunities of employment. In some cases this process had begun already, and it was going very well, as far as I can judge from the short experiment, especially having regard to the fact that the moment of their arrival was the most unfortunate possible, owing to the depression of trade. If the men could be kept here with the colours for a time, I feel confident that a considerable proportion of them would be absorbed into civil employment with the first revival of trade.

After the distribution of the reduced forces had been arranged, Lord Roberts, anxious to comply with the wishes of the Natal Government that some British troops should be stationed there, since there were symptoms of unrest among the Zulus, suggested the removal of a battalion from Middelburg to Natal.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Lord Roberts.

10/10/04. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . I should have been most happy to meet McCallum's wishes . . . had those wishes not appeared to me to conflict with considerations of still higher order. We have now been cut down, for the main purposes of Imperial Defence in South Africa, . . . to an absolute minimum. On that basis a scheme has been worked out in its main outlines, and is even now being worked out in full detail. Considering the scanty materials, I think it a good scheme and just sufficient, and I believe if we could only, by any possibility, stick to it, for 10 or even perhaps 5 years, the thought, and with it the possibility of a fresh resort to arms, would die out. But what breaks one's heart is the perpetual changing, the consistent further reduction of

figures once definitely agreed upon, and the way we have of living from hand to mouth. The placing of a regiment in Natal does materially affect the arrangements for the adequate defence, including the necessary offensive action, of our great central positions. More than that, if we once admit that a *minimum* is capable of further reduction, there is no end to the process, and I know it is only by absolutely resisting *any* further reduction that we can prevent the force being continually whittled away till it is perfectly useless, and worse than useless, for a few scattered and immobile garrisons wd. be an absolute danger, and merely so many temptations to would-be rebels, as, in case of any wide-spread rising, they would either have to be withdrawn or relieved. As far as Natal is concerned, I am sorry. But if Natal needs a local regiment for a particular local purpose, the Empire should be in a position to supply it, without impairing the existing organization for a much bigger object of first-rate Imperial interest. At the same time I have no doubt that, maintaining the present distribution of our S.A. garrison, we should almost certainly be able, if occasion arose, to help Natal, and to do so almost as promptly from Standerton, Middelburg, or Pretoria as from Maritzburg. . . .

Before the end of the year, however, there was another move by the War Office, for still further reducing the garrison in South Africa. On reading Milner's strongly worded protest (Milner to Lyttelton, 19/12/04), Roberts promised him his full support (Milner Papers, XL, ii, 112, Roberts to Milner, 27/1/05), and on February 11 he wrote to say " Garrison will be maintained at practically its present strength."

The redistribution and reorganization of the local armed forces offered a problem bristling with thorny points.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Colonel [Sir Charles] Crewe.

27/4/04. [PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL] . . . The other is a very big question—that of the local armed forces of S. Africa. I have a heavy job to look after my own portion of them. What I want to do is (1) to work towards their ultimate amalgamation under a Federal Government, (2) to try and develop some organic connection between them and the Imperial Forces. At present I think there is great overlapping and waste. That cannot be helped, but one wants to work towards ultimate co-operation and economy. We are at present providing in these two Colonies, besides the Municipal Police of Jo'burg and Pretoria, 5,000 S.A.C. at approximate cost of £1,250,000, 5,000 Transvaal Volunteers at

£200,000, and shortly in all probability 1,500 O.R.C. Volunteers. Altogether a million and a half of money and, say, 10,000 fighting men. I should like to find out what your plans are, i.e. what is to be your normal establishment, if you carry out your scheme, of C.M.R. ; C.P. ; Volunteers ? What is their cost going to be and what the relation between them, especially the two former ? . . . I should like to shape my course in such a way, that it might be possible in the long run, to have under a Federal Government, *one* force, uniting C.P., S.A.C., and C.M.R., i.e. all the not purely civil police, and *another* consisting of all the volunteers, both with appropriate reserves, and run on the same lines throughout the whole country. And I should also like the Imperial Government, *for a consideration*, to have a call on some proportion of both forces, certainly the latter, in case of a national struggle, say for India. These are big ideas, perhaps you may think them much in the air. In conversation I could, perhaps, show you that they are not so very unpractical. . . .

British Indians.

Whilst Milner was being almost overwhelmed by telegraphic correspondence, adjusting details of the Labour Ordinance with the Colonial Secretary, a disastrous flood destroyed part of the capital of the Orange River Colony (Jan. 17, 1904). The High Commissioner at once left for Bloemfontein. During a stay of four days, he helped to organize the relief of the sufferers, and to arrange for remedial measures to prevent such a disaster in the future. Hardly was this visitation overpast, when bubonic plague broke out among the Indian coolies at Johannesburg (March). Coming at the moment when the importation of Chinese labour was about to begin, this outbreak caused infinite anxiety.

Fortunately, it was quickly overcome. But it had its effect upon another difficult problem which exercised the statesmanship of Milner and the British Government. This was the status of British Indians in the Transvaal. Fundamentally, the issue at stake involved a divergence between Colonial sentiment, arising from the instinct of economic self-preservation, and Imperial theory postulating freedom of movement and occupation for any British subject within the Empire.

The British Government had protested, on behalf of its Asiatic subjects, against the anti-Indian legislation of the South African Republic. How far could it now rescind it ? Colonial feeling was definitely opposed to permitting an influx of Indian small

traders, who would assuredly displace European shopkeepers in the Transvaal, as they had done in Natal. Proposals for legislation likely to meet the views of the Transvaal were submitted by Milner to Chamberlain in 1902. They fixed the fee for annual registration of Asiatics at £3 and restricted their place of residence and business to definite locations in the towns; and, whilst giving them the right to hold real property, restricted that right to town areas and a period of five years. But exemption from registration was to be granted to educated and civilized Asiatics. These regulations and restrictions Chamberlain rejected, as being practically a continuance of the system of the South African Republic against which H.M. Government had repeatedly protested. Measures of restriction, he added, could only be justified on sanitary and other reasonable grounds.

For a solution of this complicated problem, Milner looked to his principle that civilization, and not colour, should be the test for rights of citizenship. Delay in solving it meant that, in the absence of any legislation to take the place of that of the late Republic, the position of British Indian immigrants was anomalous. Still more unsatisfactory was the status of coloured residents before the war, who had hoped to be freed from all disabilities. Meanwhile, the Permit system, under the Peace Preservation Proclamation of 1902 and Ordinance of 1903, kept immigrants in check. The Indian Government was not satisfied with the status accorded to its subjects in the Transvaal, whilst on sanitary grounds it was held to be necessary to segregate the Asiatic population in locations. Milner, anxious to obtain coolies from India, endeavoured to meet the requirements of the Indian Government. After consultation with Chamberlain during his visit to Johannesburg, a notice was issued by the Transvaal Government, announcing a policy similar to that of the proposals made in the preceding year.[1]

Negotiations with the Government of India on these lines were proceeding satisfactorily, when the outbreak of plague at Johannesburg quickened the demand for restrictions upon Asiatic immigrants and residents. Milner and Lawley, therefore, in April, requested the assent of the Imperial Government to such legislation as would satisfy local feeling. But at this very moment the Transvaal

[1] April 8, 1903. *v.* Milner's despatch to Secretary of State, May 11. A deputation of the British Indian Association, headed by M. K. Gandhi, protesting against the registration fee and restriction of their trade to locations, was received by the High Commission on May 22.

Supreme Court reversed a decision of the late High Court, and ruled that under the existing law Asiatics could not be prohibited from trading outside the locations to which their residence was confined.[1] In consequence of this decision, which established the rights for which H.M. Government had long contended, Lyttelton replied (July 8) that assent could only be given to legislation which, without restricting their right to trade outside, confined the lower class of Asiatics to residence in locations or bazaars, and that on sanitary grounds alone ; those of a superior class must be exempted and allowed to reside and trade anywhere.

The Transvaal Legislative Council thereupon suggested a Commission of Inquiry, and that, pending its report and in order to prevent the creation of further vested interests, the issue of further trading licences to Asiatics should be suspended. But the Imperial Government could not recede from a position in which, indeed, the national honour was involved. Final determination of the question was therefore allowed to await the expression of the people of the Colony, when representative Government should have been established.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner[2] *to Mr. H. Ramsay Collins.*

7/9/04. [PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL] . . . I find that we are in very considerable sympathy about the Native Question. As regards the tribal natives, I am convinced that we at present err in both directions—at any rate in the Cape. The blanket vote is detestable, and I do not know that one at least of the suggested alternatives—members returned to Parliament by the natives voting separately—is much better. Rival white candidates competing for the support of a native party in Parliament (though that party consisted of only a few members, it might hold the balance of power) would be almost as bad. This is giving the natives too much. On the other hand, I entirely agree with you that to have them *wholly unrepresented* is giving them too little. Moreover, it is bad for us whites. A knowledge of what the natives think and want for themselves—and that is a knowledge which very few of us at present have—should surely be a *material* (I do not say it should be a *decisive*) factor in the determination of native policy. That being the case, it does seem to me to be worth considering (I do not say it is the best solution, but it is the only one I see at present) whether a separate Native Council, composed of Natives elected by Natives, might not be constituted in each Colony.

[1] April 18, 1904. Cd. 1683, 1684, 2239.

[2] In reply to a letter asking for his views on representation of natives.

Certainly I should be grateful to any Colony for trying the experiment. To this Council all measures affecting Natives might be referred before being submitted to the White Parliament for final decision. There might be even a limited legislative power conferred upon such an Assembly, in matters affecting Natives only within the areas of native districts. There would always be the veto of the Governor, to prevent the power being abused. This for the native in his native state. I think people might be got to accept the idea.

What would be more difficult, but what I personally attach importance to, is, that having provided separately for the bulk of the native population, we should recognize that, for the civilized native, a *coloured man*, living among civilized men in a civilized way—not as a labourer, but in some higher condition of life—at the least as an independent trader, or as a teacher or professional man—all colour disabilities, political or other, should be cancelled. Property and a high education test would be essential conditions. I never can see why the property and education tests need be identical for black and white. I should deliberately and quite frankly make the(m) *higher* for the black, and I am prepared to justify this. But whatever the standard proposed, let there be some standard, the attainment of which will relieve the coloured man, of whatever race, from all *legal* disadvantages, as compared with the white. The bulk of the natives, electing representatives of their own, the pick of the natives (and coloured people) who are not on the native plane of civilization, but on our plane, voting like us—that seems to me the double principle on which the problem should be tackled. I admit that No. 2 is the greater stumbling-block. You will see in it the cloven hoof. It is in fact our old friend, my pet heresy, about " white privileges," which as set forth in my Asiatic Despatch,[1] met with many critics and no admirers. Humbly, but quite unshaken by my present want of success in the matter, I venture to adhere to it. . . .

The High Commissioner watched developments in the local governments with constant care.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to [*Sir*] *Harry Wilson, Acting Lt.-Governor, O.R.C.*

11/3/04. . . . I am a little bothered by Section 37 of the Masters and Servants Ordinance, which deals with the offences of coloured servants. . . . I find that the Resident Magistrate may inflict punishment for three months, with or without 25 lashes. . . . Now, the Secretary of State, as you know, has constantly objected

[1] See p. 307.

to the infliction of lashes except for brutal crimes, and even then under strict safeguards. . . . When I look at the offences enumerated under Section 37 . . . I doubt whether any of them ought to be punished by flogging, except, perhaps, in cases of extreme recalcitrancy. . . . I cannot, as at present advised, assent to the Ordinance. . . .

The Attorney-General (Mr. H. F. Blaine) then proposed that the Ordinance should be accompanied by a circular letter to Resident Magistrates, which would ensure that lashes would not be inflicted, except in very aggravated cases.

Education

In spite of the great difficulties arising from the necessity of creating a staff of teachers and adequate school accommodation, rapid progress was being made with the Education system under (Major-General Sir) Fabian Ware and Mr. Hugh Gunn, Directors of Education in the respective Colonies, with Mr. Sargent as adviser to the Government (Cd. 2104. *v.* Ch. VII).

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

16/5/04. [PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL] . . . Most awful rush this week. In my whole devilish experience in South Africa I have seldom had a worse one. I hope the 10 tons of Reports I am sending you will be of some use and will be in time. . . . It is impossible to *write well* at 60 miles an hour. But I think some of the *material* is striking. Look at Education—29,000 children in schools in the T.V. as against 14,000 under the old government, and that with those parsons working hard against us the whole time. See, too, all that is being done for Agriculture. . . .

Opposition to the Government scheme was organized on racial lines by the Dutch Reformed Church, which was loth to surrender the control which it had been accustomed to exercise. The predikants demanded that teachers should be appointed by School Committees chosen by the people, and that Dutch and English languages should be placed on an equality. The Education Ordinance had provided that instruction in Dutch should be given for five hours a week to the children of those parents who desired it.

Extract from Despatch. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

13/6/04. . . . In September, 1903, the Director of Education was approached by the clerical members of the Christelijks Nationaal Onderwijs Commissie, representing all branches of the Dutch

Church. . . . It seemed to me to be desirable for many reasons to arrive at a settlement of the outstanding points of disagreement on educational matters between the Government and those who claim in this matter to represent the Dutch Church and people. The Government system has met with success on the farms and in the outlying districts, where it is undoubtedly in the great majority of cases welcomed by the people. At the same time it continues to be publicly opposed by those who are regarded as the leaders of Boer opinion, and it seemed worth while to make an effort to disarm this opposition and to conciliate at least the moderate members of the Committee, whose names carry great weight with the Boer people.

It is true that by following the policy of directly dealing with the people we had succeeded in bringing nearly twice as many children into school as ever visited the schools of the late Government. Still, as long as we had to face the organized hostility of the Dutch Churches, I felt that however successful we might be, our system would be exposed to various grave disadvantages. There would be a waste of money, owing to the existence of two competing systems of schools. The existence of the rival Dutch schools would make it difficult to attract many of the most competent Dutch teachers to the Government schools. Finally, as long as the open war between the Government and the Churches on the subject of education continued, it would be difficult to carry into effect the policy of representative local control in educational matters, which it is, for many reasons, desirable to introduce as soon as it can safely be done. These views were shared by Sir Arthur Lawley and the other members of the Transvaal Executive, and prolonged discussions took place between them, Mr. Sargant, Mr. Ware and myself, with a view to deciding what modifications of our educational system could be proposed in order to meet the views of the Dutch opposition, and to ensure a single system of public education. While there was considerable difference of opinion between us as to the lengths to which the Government could afford to go with that object, and the exact form which our concessions should take, there was general agreement as to the desirability of a compromise. . . .

After describing how these negotiations with Mr. Ware were broken off, and likewise subsequent negotiations between Milner himself, Botha and Smuts, just when they seemed to be drawing towards an agreement, the despatch concluded :

. . . The course pursued by the Committee appears to me to indicate that there was a division of opinion in that body, some

desiring to continue the negotiations, in the hope of arriving at an understanding with the Government, and others only seeking for a pretext to break them off, and that the latter party prevailed. This impression is confirmed by the introduction, for the first time during the whole course of the negotiations, in the Committee's letter of the 13th April, of the demand that the Dutch and English languages should be acknowledged to have equal rights in the schools. I own that I have considerable sympathy with the suggestion put forward at an earlier stage of the negotiations that it should be left to the discretion of the teachers to avail themselves of Dutch as a medium of instruction in the lower classes of schools, until the children were better able to follow the lessons in English. But between this proposal and the demand of equal rights for the two languages there is a wide difference. It is perfectly well known to be a fundamental principle of the educational policy of the Government that while the Dutch language is to be thoroughly well taught, the medium of instruction is, as a general rule, to be English. The principle of the equality of the two languages has been consistently rejected by us from the first, and the Committee in putting forward this demand in their last letter must have been perfectly well aware that they were killing the negotiations. The failure of these negotiations and the continuance of opposition based on the assertion that the religion and language of the Boer population is being undermined by the educational system of the Government is all the more disappointing, as there is every reason to believe that the Boers themselves, when uninfluenced by direct pressure on the part of their leaders, are satisfied that their religion meets with all respect in the Government schools, and that the number of hours allotted to the teaching of Dutch is sufficient.

Whilst negotiations were in progress, a letter signed by the Rev. H. S. Bosman, Moderator of the Dutch Reformed Church in the Transvaal, and others, had been circulated (March 23), to the Councils of the Congregations, refusing co-operation with the Government in educational matters until school teachers were allowed to be appointed by Committees elected by the people, and justice done "to the language of their Church." The present system, it declared, must be opposed "even to the shedding of blood." Independent schools must be established, and no negotiations with the Education Department entertained. In pursuance of these objects, every means was used to divert children from the Government schools, and to promote unrest among the country Boers by fantastic promises of arms and help from Europe, which

would soon put an end to British rule (Milner Papers, XXVIII, iii, 6, 36, 53).

Similarly, opposition in the Orange River Colony was organized by the Dutch Reformed Church, when the reply to a largely signed petition to the Lieutenant-Governor had been decided by the Synod to be unsatisfactory :

Extract from Despatch, Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

ORANGE RIVER COLONY. 30/7/04. [CONFIDENTIAL] . . . Opposition schools have already been established at Boshof, Kroonstad, Ladybrand and Brandfort. The object of the Church in doing this has clearly been to withdraw as many children from Government schools as possible, in order to be able to say that the Church policy has the approval and support of the parents. So far their efforts have not been attended with much success, only a comparatively small number of pupils having been withdrawn from the Government schools. At Boshof, however, the pressure brought to bear upon parents practically amounted to intimidation. . . . Many of the parents who had to withdraw their children expressed the deepest regret to the Principal of the Government school, and stated that they were quite satisfied with it. False reports of various descriptions, intended to damage the Government schools, have been spread abroad throughout the Colony. . . .[1]

But although supported by the political leaders, particularly in the matter of languages, the movement made little progress. Most Dutch parents preferred to have their children taught in English, and Hollander teachers brought over from the Opposition schools proved unpopular. It was realized that the development of private Dutch schools would involve division among them into Dutch Reformed, Dopper, Roman Catholic and Anglican sections, just as the persecution of the National Scouts by the extremists had led to the setting up of rival churches by them. The Government system, on the contrary, both primary and secondary, progressed steadily.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. [*Sir Fabian*] *Ware.*

30/10/04. . . . I am beginning to be very hopeful that, as regards Elementary Schools, we may be able to maintain the

[1] Although the Government had contributed largely to the rebuilding of the Dutch churches and parsonages destroyed during the war, reports were disseminated that the Government intended to convert the children to Roman Catholicism. Cf. the Manifesto of the Bond, Vol. I, p. 46.

Free and State system for ever, and that is the whole battle. . . . (XXXVI, iii, 46.)

Apart from this question of education, the Boer political leaders, whilst agitating continually against the Government, both publicly and in private, had availed themselves of their privilege of access to the High Commissioner to represent to him in private conversations the grievances of their compatriots, and to press their extravagant claims in the matter of the Compensation fund.

Extract from Letter. General Botha to Lord Milner.

(*Translation*) 24/8/04. Last night I completed my return journey from Vryheid, where the payment of the free gift took place. This payment has aroused the greatest possible dissatisfaction. I told the people there to remain calm and collected, and that I would see you personally about the matter. I therefore wish to ask you to give me an appointment for discussing this and other important matters. . . .

A movement, however, had for some time been on foot for forming Farmers' Associations (Boeren Vereeniging) in the new Colonies, in connection with the plan of the Afrikander Bond to change its name to the South African Party, and work, at least ostensibly, for reconciliation. It was intended that these associations should, if possible, obtain the blessing of the authorities, but that, when the time was ripe, they should amalgamate with those of the Cape Colony under the direction of Ewald Esselen and his friends, in conjunction with Hofmeyr and Koopman. At some of their meetings, Boer spokesmen urged the building up of a great Afrikander nation, and the women were exhorted to inspire their children with the national spirit, as they had done during the war, and to teach them the Taal, for "otherwise even the angels in heaven would be unable to speak to them" (Milner Papers, XLI, v, 30).

Milner regarded the scheme with considerable uneasiness, for it was in this manner and under this very name that the Afrikander Bond began its existence in the Cape Colony. He hoped, however, that recognition by the authorities might tend to prevent these associations from being used for political purposes.

And now, when it was expected that a Radical Government would very shortly come into power, the Boer leaders began to take a more active line of opposition. They had at first maintained a guarded neutrality upon the question of Chinese Labour. But a

week before the attack upon the Ordinance was about to be launched in the House of Commons, they suddenly issued a protest against it (Feb. 10). Shortly afterwards General Botha organized a Boer Congress, composed of Delegates elected under the old Commando system. This was intended to be the first openly active step towards the accomplishment of the old ideal of South Africa for the South Africans. That ideal meant for them South Africa for the Boers. But on its face value it was an ideal which was attracting many of the British population, some of whom were disappointed aspirants to office, and others dissatisfied with the existing state of things on other grounds. They began to form a South African Association and Afrikander Club.

In forwarding to the Secretary of State reports of some of the meetings held in preparation for the Congress, Milner commented:

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

22/2/04. . . . There is no doubt that a political movement is afoot among the Boers of both the new Colonies, which proceeds from Bloemfontein and Pretoria, is engineered by the leaders of the men who surrendered at Vereeniging and by the members of the "deputation" sent to Europe during the war (especially Fischer and Wolmarans), and is directed to the keeping up of discontent with the present form of government, and possibly, at an early date, starting an organized agitation for Responsible Government. Every opportunity of any large gathering of Boers, and especially the meetings of "Farmers' Associations," some of which bodies I look upon with great suspicion, is utilized for this purpose. . . . I do not believe that the leaders of this movement, men like Botha and [G. G.] Munnik, or the moving spirits, Fischer and Smuts, have any intention of inciting to, still less of taking part in, rebellion. But it is certain, as the political movement grows in force, the wilder and less responsible men behind, who think of nothing but rebellion at the first convenient opportunity, and who have been a good deal excited lately by reports of the war in the East and the possibility of England being involved in it, become active and restless. My information does not point to any immediate danger. I think all talk of such danger is wild talk. But I am bound to say that the general attitude and temper of a considerable section of the Boer population is a great deal more disquieting than it was a twelvemonth or even six months ago. . . .

Before the Congress met, it was realized that the hope of an immediate change of Government in England was fallacious.

As Botha now announced that there was not the slightest intention of promoting a revolution, but that the idea of the Congress was "purely and simply to strengthen the hands of the Government," the Government responded by welcoming the Delegates very heartily to Pretoria (May 23). Their immediate business was to protest against the Gold and Diamond Ordinances and the Education system. These and other complaints as to the compensation fund, etc., were answered by Sir Arthur Lawley and Sir Richard Solomon in wise and convincing speeches (Cd. 2104).

In December a similar Congress, held in the Orange River Colony, with General Hertzog as Chairman, demanded further grants for ex-burghers, recognition of Dutch on equal terms with English, and complete self-government at the earliest possible moment. It was resolved that independent schools must be established for Afrikander natives. Sir H. Goold-Adams invited the Delegates to discuss these matters with him. The invitation was refused. The Lieutenant-Governor was requested to lay these and other resolutions before H.M. Government, and it was resolved that until these demands were satisfied, no co-operation with the Government would be possible for the Boers.

CHAPTER XV

The Lyttelton Constitution

IF the prospect of a change of government at home had influenced political action in the two new Colonies, it had a no less direct effect upon Milner's own outlook, and that of the Unionist Government. The latter hardly expected to remain in office beyond the spring of 1905. Milner, feeling that he had accomplished a great part of his task, and that his health was suffering from the terrific strain to which he had been continuously subjected, was anxious to retire before a Radical Government came into power, in order that a successor likely to continue his policy should be chosen before that event. Both he and the Imperial Government came simultaneously to the conclusion that it would be wise to inaugurate a system of representative government, which would so far satisfy the incoming Liberal administration as to save it from being driven by its extreme supporters to a complete change of policy. At the end of April, Lyttelton wrote to the High Commissioner :

Extract from Letter. Mr. Lyttelton to Lord Milner.

26/4/04. . . . I talked to the Prime Minister about our staying in and I think that he is of opinion that we have a reasonable certainty of weathering the session, but that a dissolution is to be expected next Spring, when almost inevitably we shall be beaten. When the other side come in, they will be confronted with their dishonest and insincere utterances about Chinese Labour by the ignorant and sincere of their followers, and I am convinced that they will extricate themselves from a painful dilemma by granting self-government to the new Colonies *sans phrase*. Under these circumstances I should very much like to know whether you think it in any way desirable that we, in our remaining year, should make a cautious move in that direction, safeguarding our steps most rigorously. It would have been far better if the whole thing could have been left alone for a time, but the question now

is whether the first step towards self-government had not better be taken under your and our guidance, than under that of men who seem very reckless of the essential interests of South Africa. Your policy in regard to the representation of the non-officials in the Inter-colonial Council appeared to me as possibly implying a movement towards greater autonomy, but whether I read those signs aright or not, I should greatly like to have your views on the matter, and whether in the light of the facts I anticipate, you would favour a reconsideration of the situation. . . .

The 7th Article of the Peace terms of Vereeniging had promised that " as soon as circumstances permit, representative institutions leading up to self-government, will be introduced." All were agreed that responsible government must soon be granted. But responsible government means party government. The inhabitants of the South African Republic had had no experience of it. It was, therefore, thought best that, as in the case of Natal, the Cape and other Colonies, an intermediate and educational period of representative Government should intervene, in which Dutch and English citizens might be trained in the practice of self-government, and learn to work together as members of an elected Assembly.[1] Moreover, the Peace was barely two years old. It seemed wiser to grant liberal representative institutions, without control of the Executive for a while, rather than to run the risk of handing over the fortunes of the conquered territory, at once and unrestrictedly, to a majority of recent enemies, swollen by a section of the British population lacking political experience, and led by men who were either disappointed aspirants to office, or mere fanatics for a phrase. Lyttelton's despatch quoted above crossed two on the same subject written by Milner a few days later (May 2 and 9). In the first he summarized the position as he saw it, and gave his reasons for preferring " a half-way house " ; in the second, he dealt with the financial aspect and security for the War Contribution and Guaranteed Loan.

Extract from Despatch. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

JOHANNESBURG. 2/5/04. [SECRET] . . . The time has arrived, when it seems desirable, and even necessary, that I should receive some indication of the views of H.M. Government with regard to the course of our future policy in the two new Colonies. With the end of this year the huge task of dealing with the immediate after-effects of the war, as far at least as material conditions are con-

[1] Cf. Despatch covering Letters Patent, March 31, 1905. Cd. 2400.

cerned, will have been completed or nearly completed. The several sums allotted, as free grants or out of loan, for relief or compensation, to various classes of the population, will have been fully disbursed. Industry and agriculture will have resumed their normal course. If the labour question can be solved, or even partially solved, we may hope that industry at any rate, and very likely agriculture also, will have attained a higher degree of development than any yet known in the country between the Orange River and the Limpopo. So far so good. But towards the solution of the still greater, though less urgent, problem—I mean the political status and condition of the new Colonies—little advance has yet been made.

It is true that, even in this respect, we have done, in one sense, a great deal. Elective Municipalities or Local Boards have been established in all the towns and larger villages of the Transvaal, while in the Orange River Colony, where similar institutions existed before the war, they have been in full operation since its conclusion. In all their domestic affairs, the urban centres of both Colonies are completely self-governing communities, and the system works well. The creation of elective boards for the rural districts is now under consideration. . . . But every extension of local self-government only brings us nearer the much more difficult and dangerous problem of self-government for each Colony as a whole. . . .

The nature of the problem can be very briefly stated. A Colony enjoying what is known as " responsible " Government—by which I mean a system, under which the people of the Colony choose the Legislature and the Legislature appoints the Government—is to all effects and purposes independent. The political union existing between such a Colony and the Mother-Country rests virtually on affection alone. It is impossible to imagine a Colony with responsible government remaining for any length of time a part of the Empire, if its citizens were ill-affected toward the Mother-Country, or desired separation. Under such conditions, even if formal separation were for a time deferred, the nominal allegiance of the Colony to the Crown would be a source of weakness, rather than of strength, to the rest of the Empire. The position would be almost worse if in a Colony with responsible government the citizens were divided into two parties, one deeply attached to the Imperial connection, the other bitterly hostile to it. In that case, the Colony would not only be a weakness to the Empire, but would be constantly exposed to the danger of civil war.

For this reason, it has always appeared to me—and I do not suppose the view was singular—that it should be our policy to

defer responsible government in the new Colonies until the Boers, or at least a large proportion of them, had learned to acquiesce—it must needs be many years before they rejoice—in membership of the British Empire, or until the British element of the population had been so strengthened as to make separation impracticable. But while recognizing the necessity of deferring responsible government for the reasons just stated, I also feel, and every day that passes impresses on me more and more, the extreme undesirability of deferring it for too long, especially in the case of the Transvaal. There is no white population more impatient of control, or more lacking in the political experience and training, which self-government is best calculated to teach, than the people of that Colony, and in particular the British inhabitants. They have many splendid qualities. They are among the most vigorous and promising of the young communities of European origin. But they are politically inexperienced and thoughtless to a degree. No British population in the world would be more benefited by being forced to realize to the full the meaning of that responsibility which they are so anxious to assume, if only the experiment were not so fearfully dangerous, both for themselves and for the rest of South Africa and the Empire. And very dangerous it must remain, as long as there is a chance that the Legislature of the Transvaal, which, under responsible government, must control the destinies of the country, would consist, very largely, or even mainly, of men hostile to Great Britain and to the Imperial connection. That danger, however, may arise from deferring responsible government too long, as well as from granting it too soon. We are in this dilemma, that the speedy introducing it would probably result in a Boer Ministry, or a Ministry under Boer control, while any prolonged delay in introducing it would cause a large section of the British to throw themselves into the arms of the Boers and might thus result, when complete self-government was at length established, in the advent to power of an anti-British administration, all the more formidable because largely composed of British people.

It is true that some of the British party, while they might ally themselves with the Boers in agitating for responsible government, would probably revert to their old allegiance when that object had been gained. But that is a contingency too uncertain to be relied upon. It is particularly unfortunate that the events of the last year, and especially of the last six months, have greatly aggravated this dilemma in two ways. In the first place, the labour difficulty, and the consequent depression in trade and industry, have most seriously checked immigration. Had the influx of new settlers into this Colony proceeded at the rate which

prevailed from the close of the war till the last quarter of 1903, the question of British predominance would have settled itself in a very few years. But the rate of immigration has now greatly decreased, and is still decreasing, while there is a sensible movement in the other direction. In the twelve months ending 30th November last 31,025 new-comers of European origin, of whom 26,946 were British subjects, entered the Transvaal. British immigration was at the rate of 2,245 a month. Between the 30th November and the 31st March the number of British immigrants was only 800 a month, while the number of those leaving the Colony was probably as great, if not greater, though we have unfortunately no precise statistics of emigration.

The great check given to the prosperity of the Colony has thus materially clouded the political outlook. And, secondly, the position has been further impaired by the unfortunate controversy at home over the importation of Asiatic Labour, and by the fact that the difficulties of this Colony have become a counter in the game of party politics. This circumstance has undoubtedly given a great impetus to the agitation in favour of the speedy introduction of self-government among the less patient and far-sighted portion of the British community. Thus at one and the same time the desire for self-government has been greatly strengthened and the increase of the British population, which would render the gratification of that desire less dangerous, has been sensibly retarded, if not for the time being altogether stopped. As far as the latter point is concerned, I hope that a speedy solution of the labour problem may presently lead to a revival of immigration. But the agitation for self-government, once fairly started, will certainly go on, and it would be impolitic to ignore it. . . . Unless something is done, we shall soon have to confront an organized movement, which the bulk of the British population will thoughtlessly welcome, and in which many of the more thoughtful men will reluctantly join, from fear of being left in the cold. . . .

In a few months we shall have the result of the recent census, and it will then for the first time be possible to make proposals for a distribution of seats in some proportion to the numbers of the people. We shall also be in a position to know, more or less, what would be the political effect of different systems of distribution, and shall not be taking a complete leap in the dark. . . . Something must in any case be decided soon with regard to the future of the Legislative Council. The present members of that body were appointed for two years from April, 1903. Their next, and, unless something unforeseen happens, probably their last, Session will be over in July or August. Unless we are disposed simply to continue the existing system, which would give universal dissatisfaction, it is not too soon

to consider—having regard to the length of time necessary to work out the details of any system of representation—what we intend to put in its place. Except in one respect, to which I will refer directly, I do not think the position of the Government would be weakened, or the progress of the country in the right direction prejudiced by the substitution of an elected Legislature for the present Nominated Council. I assume that in that case the attempt to keep a Government majority in the Legislative Assembly would be frankly abandoned, though the Members of the Executive Council and perhaps a few other Government nominees would have seats and votes in that body. . . .

The elected members will, in all probability, be drawn in pretty equal numbers from the British and Dutch population. I doubt whether in that case either party would be very keen to establish Responsible Government at the risk of finding itself under the heel of the other. An overwhelming Dutch majority is practically impossible. On the other hand, an overwhelming British majority, which is highly improbable, but just possible, might indeed make a strong push for Responsible Government, but then, with an overwhelming British majority, Responsible Government would be by far the best system. The one point of difficulty, which I foresee in the half-way house of a "representative" but not yet "responsible" Legislature, is that, even without a general combination of elected members against the Government, there might be an occasional, and very embarrassing, combination, not so much against an essential Legislative measure, as against some essential item in the Estimates. This is a danger which I think would have to be specially guarded against in the Constitution of any elective Legislature. Supposing the general line of policy indicated above to meet with your approval, I think it would be well that the first step should come from H.M. Government—in the shape, for instance, of a despatch, intended for publication, in which the desirability of introducing representative Government at the earliest opportunity was pointed out, and an invitation given to me to make my suggestions on the subject. It would be useful to make it quite clear that H.M. Government, while anxious to proceed in the direction of popular government, regarded that process as necessarily a gradual one, and was alive to the dangers of precipitate action.

I think the mere fact of it becoming known, that H.M. Government wished this Colony to obtain self-government and was determined to move steadily, though cautiously, in that direction, would have a good effect—all the more so if the announcement was spontaneous and not elicited by any organized agitation here,—and that it would conciliate a great body of sensible opinion on this side, which, in the absence of any such indication of policy, might be

alienated from us. Beyond this very tentative first step, I do not think I am as yet in a position to advise about the method of procedure. But it is evident that, before any measure to establish an elective Legislature in the Transvaal can take definite shape, a number of matters of detail will have to be most carefully considered. . . . [*After enumerating some of these, he continued :*] On all such matters, I may say at once that I look to the Colonial Office, with its immense experience of all varieties of Colonial institutions and its archives full of precedents, to give us a line, not necessarily by laying down a rigid and unalterable form of constitution, which might, in certain respects, be unsuitable to the very peculiar circumstances of the Transvaal, but by supplying a draft, consonant with your general views as to the degree of self-government to be accorded, on which we would have an opportunity to offer our suggestions. With regard to the details . . . affecting the actual election of members—such as the constituencies to be created, the distribution of seats between those constituencies, the qualification of voters, etc., etc.,—I think the first proposals must necessarily come from here, and as soon as (1) I know that you approve of my going into the matter, and (2) I am in possession of the results of the census, I will begin to frame some proposals for your consideration. . . .

It is perfectly evident that, whatever may be the difficulties besetting the introduction of " Responsible " Government in the Transvaal, they are not so great as the difficulties besetting it in the Orange River Colony. Indeed even that limited measure of self-government, which I have suggested for the former Colony, could not, in my judgment, be simultaneously introduced in the latter without involving us in grave embarrassments. I quite admit that, if we do not deal with the question in the two Colonies simultaneously, there will be a howl. And I realize that, once that representative institutions have been given to the Transvaal, it is only a question of time, and probably a short time, when a similar step will be taken in the Orange River Colony. But this happens to be a case, in which time is of the very first importance. If the experiment is successful in the Transvaal, the danger of extending it to the Orange River Colony will be greatly diminished. And granted that we have to try an experiment, which at best is somewhat risky, there is surely obvious common sense in trying it first under the less dangerous conditions and waiting to see the result of that step, before trying it under the more dangerous. Moreover, the principal reason for hurry in the Transvaal—i.e. the fear of alienating the British population by keeping them too long in leading strings—does not exist in the case of the Orange River Colony. The British population there is in a decided

minority and that in almost every constituency—though, if we can push Land Settlement along a little faster, the number of potentially British constituencies may be somewhat increased in the next year or two. That being the case, we are certainly not going to alienate the British by not hurrying to put them under the control of their late enemies.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Alfred Lyttelton.

9/5/04. [PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL] . . . Once through this Session, I take it you are safe till early in next year. I think we *might*, and if we can, I think we *ought*, to utilize the interval to establish a system here, which should last for two or three years and which, while widely different from that which any radical Government would be *forced*, probably contrary to their own better judgment, to establish, would still be sufficiently *popular* and a sufficient step towards their professed ideal, to justify them in not at once upsetting it, as the wiser heads among them would doubtless be reluctant to do. . . . If I can get the financial jumble disentangled—and I can do that, for sure, whenever we can raise the remaining five millions of the loan—and can help you in taking the next step in constitutional development—I shall have done all that I can hope to do. It is quite certain, that I should not live 6 weeks with a Radical Government, even if they did not recall me at once, as in their own interests they had better do. Therefore I want to clear *in time for you to appoint my successor.* And, from the purely personal point of view, I want to clear, at latest, in the spring of 1905. Reasons of health are decisive. I may live many years yet. But it is quite certain that, if I am to live as anything but a crock, I must be taken out of this harness before very long, and turned out to grass for at least a year, perhaps longer. I have medical authority for this, but if there was no such thing as a doctor in the world, I should know it quite well from my own experience. If it was in the public interest that I should go on till I dropped, I should not hesitate. I am 50 and have had my run for my money. But what I will not face is the gradual but certain loss of efficiency, which going on when you are worn out involves.

I shall do no good by struggling on to carry a burden, which I feel I cannot much longer carry properly. But I should lay it down with a much easier mind, if one or two big matters, which I have indicated, could be, if not settled, at any rate put into a fair way of settlement, first. And I would then leave a much lighter task—it can *never* be a *light* one—to my successor. Another thing, which I am most anxious to do in my yet remaining time, is to give some of my principal supporters a holiday. A great

deal is said and written about this Government and its difficulties and shortcomings, but there is one cardinal point which nobody realizes. It is that the strain is so intense and so *incessant* that, whatever else may stand it, the *physical* strength of the chief workers cannot stand it. Something or other is bound to give way. If it is not the heart or the liver, it is the judgment and temper. . . . The horses are dead-beat, and you may say generally that no one, who is of any real use, is not sadly the worse for wear. . . .

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

20/5/04. [SECRET] Census Returns,[1] just published for Transvaal, seem to indicate that on any fair basis of representation Boers would have a small majority. If, however, Official Members were one-quarter, or even one-fifth, of House, I think Government could command a majority on any vital political question, as, on such issue, British members would be certain to side with them. At the same time, object lesson of what would happen under Responsible Government with a House wholly elected would be wholesome. Assuming that this system might last three or four years, immigration ought, during that time, if industry develops, to turn the balance in favour of British and so render it possible to give responsible Government with less risk. I fear that in Orange River Colony we should require at least one-third Official Members to make government possible. This seems to me additional reason for trying experiment first in case of Transvaal.

Extract from Despatch. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

6/6/04. [SECRET] I have had long conversations with J. G. Fraser, who as you know is by far the strongest man of British sympathies in the O.R.C. . . . I sounded him as to a modified form of representative government. He takes a most gloomy view of the prospect in the O.R.C., if such a system is introduced at an early date. He says the irreconcilable Dutch will carry almost every constituency, and that a large number of the better-class farmers, not only the early surrender men, but many of those who stood out to the end, dread any form of election and the political agitation which it is sure to give rise to. He says that the extremists, with the parsons at their head, would carry all the "bywoner" class and that the people generally, though glad to be left alone, would not be able to resist following the nationalist banner, if once raised. He seemed to think that representative Govt. if given to the Transvaal must also be given to O.R.C. I don't agree with this, but the fact that he thinks so is most important, as his attitude on the point is doubtless typical. He seemed to

[1] Cd. 2103.

think that, if representative Govt. was introduced, we must have a nominee Upper House. This idea I do not much like, and should prefer to rely on a strong nominee element in a single chamber. While adhering to the views expressed in my despatches, I feel the whole business needs the most careful consideration, and hope you will not make any declaration on the subject except in the most general and guarded terms, until I have had an opportunity of learning your views and replying to them. The great difficulty is the impatience of the British in the Transvaal, and the chances of their coalescing with the Boers in a demand for representation. If they would wait a few years it would no doubt be much better, but I fear they will not.

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

4/7/04. [PRIVATE AND SECRET] The controversy in the Press here about representative and responsible Government shows no signs of abating and I am afraid that, unless we make some move, the agitation will assume a troublesome aspect. On the other hand, if you were to authorize me to make, or were yourself to make some declaration to the effect that a change in the direction of representative government was imminent, that would at once satisfy a very large number of people here, and would not in my opinion involve taking action any sooner than contemplated in my despatches. The most anybody expects is that in the session of the Legislative Council next year there should be a majority, not even necessarily a large majority, of popularly elected unofficials. I do not mean that this would satisfy everybody, but it would satisfy reasonable people, and the extremists themselves are not at present hoping for more. If this could be intimated at once, the controversy would cease for the present, and we should have ample time to mature our schemes, about which I hope soon to hear from you. The great objection to the course proposed is the difficulties in which it may land us later in O.R.C. But, after having given the fullest consideration to these, I am satisfied that, unless something is said soon, we may find ourselves face to face with an agitation for full responsible Government in both Colonies, which would involve still greater difficulties. The course I advocate is therefore the lesser of two evils. Please wire whether I may give a public hint in the direction indicated, or whether you would rather do it yourself.

Extract from Telegram. Mr. Lyttelton to Lord Milner.

8/7/04. In view of the pacification of the Transvaal and of the information as to the progress of the country furnished by you, and seeing also that the census has now been taken and that

it is possible to deal with the question of representation under the guidance of well-ascertained facts, H.M. Government feel that the time has arrived for meeting the expectations created by my predecessor's undertaking, the general result of which was that, if the state of the country allowed, successive steps ultimately leading to full self-government should be taken. So far those expectations have not been disappointed. In the first place civil took the place of military rule, subsequently municipal institutions were provided and a legislative Council with a nominated unofficial element was constituted. H.M. Government now consider that a further step should be taken, and, if you concur, authorize you to announce that they have decided that the constitution should be amended by the introduction of elected members. . . .

The announcement that it was intended to grant representative government did not have the anticipated effect of proving an effective "sop to Cerberus," and staving off the demand for responsible government for a few years. On the contrary, as soon as it was promised, those who had been clamouring for an elected Legislature such as the Cape Colony long enjoyed before receiving responsible government, promptly declared that nothing but full and immediate responsible government would satisfy them. Those, on the other hand, who were chiefly concerned with safeguarding the Imperial position, concentrated their efforts on securing for the British part of the electorate those equal rights for which they had always contended. They were in no haste for responsible government, but were determined that when it came, the electoral system, by securing "one vote, one value," through equal distribution of seats according to voters and automatic redistribution, should preserve to the British residents and immigrants their due share of influence. As the numerous and engrossing questions described in the last few chapters drew within sight of settlement, interest became concentrated on the discussion of these constitutional problems.

Stimulated by the pledge given by Campbell-Bannerman (Nov. 17), to grant "a full and honest measure of self-government," Associations were formed on either side. Deputations laid their views before the High Commissioner in January, and mass meetings were held on the Rand (Jan., Feb., 1905). As to the Boers, they naturally pursued their accustomed policy of denouncing the Government and charging it with bad faith, rightly calculating that, if responsible government were to be granted soon, the split

between the British Progressive party and the malcontents would place them in power. With this object in view, they too proceeded to organize. Under the presidency of General Botha, an Association of the ex-burgher population was inaugurated (28/1/05). Het Volk (the People), as it was called, was an elaborate political machine on racial lines, and for the moment its policy was directed to boycotting the proposed Representative Government. The foundation of this organization had been laid at the Boer Congress in April. National sentiment had recently been revived by sermons and addresses delivered at the impressive ceremony of Mr. Kruger's funeral at Pretoria on Dingaan's Day (16/12/04), a solemn occasion on which respectful sympathy was shown by the British authorities, and indeed the whole British population. A similar organization was formed in the Orange River Colony, Oranjie Unie. Thus, as the inevitable result of premature insistence on self-government,[1] rival Associations of British and Boer had been founded, and the lists were set for political warfare on those racial lines which it had been Milner's object to prevent, and which a few more years of development along the path he had blazed might well have prevented for ever.

None the less, the Boer leaders pursued a perfectly legitimate and constitutional course. Botha declared that the Boers would abide loyally by their acceptance of the British flag and British institutions. But in an interview with Milner after the ex-President's funeral, the Boer leaders—Botha, Smuts, De la Rey, Schalk Burger, and A. D. Wolmarans—made it plain that they would not accept Representative Government. They regarded it as a shadow without substance. They thought it might be best that the present form of government should continue for a time. They pressed for no change, but when a change was made, it must be to the full responsible government promised in the Treaty. Still, in this interview, and the subsequent letters which passed between Smuts and Milner (Jan. 13 and 17), they discussed with him, as their British fellow-subjects also discussed, the formation of the future Parliamentary constituencies and the electoral system. Meanwhile, many letters and cables were passing between Milner and

[1] Within a month of the Peace, a Political Association had been founded at Johannesburg for obtaining immediate and full self-government. One speaker selected the singularly infelicitous occasion of the banquet to Mr. Chamberlain to demand a change of administration and to ask for " more Colony and less Crown " government.

the Secretary of State upon these and other details of the new Constitution (Milner Papers, XXVIII, iv).

After attending the session of the Inter-Colonial Council at Bloemfontein, Milner spent ten days at Sir Abe Bailey's house at Muizenberg (Nov. 11–20). There he had several interviews with "Dr. Jim" and other Cape Ministers, and composed the greater part of a despatch on the finances of the Inter-Colonial Council, and two others (Dec. 5 and 24), in response to Lyttelton's invitation (July 20) for his proposals for the new Constitution. In these despatches he made a searching examination of the electoral machinery of other States, and considered them in reference to the problem before him. "The leading facts and principal conflicting considerations are all there," he wrote to Lyttelton (23/1/05), and invited him to treat it as material for a scheme, rather than a complete scheme in itself. Yet with a few modifications, mainly the result of his subsequent reflections and consultations with the leaders of the Progressive Association, Milner's suggestions were accepted, and embodied in Letters Patent and Orders in Council published on March 31.

The new Constitution was devised in a bold and generous spirit, and was, in Milner's phrase, the greatest stride towards full responsible government. It provided for a Legislative Assembly consisting of from thirty to thirty-five elected members and from six to nine officials. Elected members were thus given complete control of legislation and finance, except for the reservation of a civil list, which included sums payable under Orders in Council to the Inter-Colonial Council. This was in accordance with Milner's desire to keep the Council financially independent of what might prove a hostile and Boer-ridden Assembly, intent on paralysing all his schemes for development.[1]

The franchise was fixed so low as to include practically every one not absolutely indigent. A Commission was to parcel out the Colony into districts on the basis of an equal number of voters, and an automatic redistribution of seats was to take place every four years. Thus the principle of equal rights, for which Milner had argued at length, and with logic and fairness in his despatch of December 5, was consistently applied. It is interesting to observe that he himself had been strongly in favour of proportional representation with three-member constituencies.

Energetic representations by Milner (March 13) prevented the

[1] Milner to Lyttelton, 6/2/05. See Ch. XVII, p. 556.

adoption of a proposal intended by the Cabinet to secure payment of the war contribution by earmarking for that purpose all surplus revenue beyond what might be required for necessary expenses of administration. He argued that this course would involve the postponement of many urgently needed public works, for which the Guaranteed Loan did not suffice. Politically it would "damn the new Constitution from the start." The best chance of a satisfactory settlement of the War Contribution was to leave it to the sense of honour of the elected Assembly, and their regard for the credit of the Colony. This, in his covering despatch of March 31, Lyttelton announced would be done, "in the assured belief" that the new Legislature "would do what is right and just" (Cd. 1400).

The Letters Patent granting the new Constitution were not issued until after Milner's departure. Whilst it was under consideration by the Cabinet, he himself urged delay. For he had realized, from the political meetings which were being held throughout the country, that he had made a miscalculation in thinking that the granting of Representative Government would serve to gain time. They seemed to indicate that the new Constitution would not command sufficient popular support to give it even temporary stability. He argued, therefore, that there was no longer need for haste in granting it, and that in the meantime development of schools, railways and land settlements, "always our trump card," should be pushed on with redoubled energy.

The means for doing so were forthcoming, for the complete and proved success of the Chinese Labour importation had saved the country from a first-class financial smash, and, as a result, industrial revival was within sight.[1]

The new Constitution was never tried. Whilst a voters' list was being prepared, a change of Government took place in England (Dec., 1905). The incoming Liberal Ministry hastened to concede full responsible Government. The first election in the Transvaal was held early in 1907. Thanks to divisions among the British population, the Boers obtained a large majority. Five years after the end of the war, Botha, with Smuts as his Colonial Secretary, formed a Government, whilst in the Orange River Colony Fischer became Prime Minister, with the large Dutch majority which had always been assured. A year later, the Bond gained a sweeping victory at the Cape. Save in Natal, the *volte face* was complete.

[1] Milner to Lyttelton, 23/1 and 31/1, and 6/2/05.

Three out of the four self-governing Colonies in South Africa were completely dominated by the Dutch.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir H. F. Wilson.

17/4/07. . . . From my point of view all that has happened in the last eighteen months is wholly deplorable. People here [*in England*]—not only Liberals—seem delighted, and to think themselves wonderfully fine fellows for having given South Africa back to the Boers. I think it all sheer lunacy. But of course, from one point of view, the thing is satisfactory. I used to worry myself sometimes thinking whether this thing could not have been done better, or that had not better have been left undone. But in face of a *volte face* so complete, obviously it would not have made the slightest difference what one did. It was evidently hopeless from the first to try and make a good job of South Africa for the British people.[1] They are not holding on to it, and the only wonder is that even "Joe" ever managed to get them to make the effort they once did. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Major A. K. Apthorpe.[2]

22/12/10. . . . I have read all your reports with interest. The work has been admirably done, and I can only hope with you that some of it will survive. Of course, the premature change of Government prevented its becoming a complete success. What we have proved, I think, is that we were absolutely on the right lines, and if we had had a reasonable amount of time, we could have done a really big thing. "'Tis not in mortals to command success," but I think we may claim that, in this case, we deserve it. . . .

Amidst these preoccupations, Milner had been honoured in October by a visit from Princess Christian, who had returned to South Africa to visit the grave of her son, Prince Christian Victor. On her departure, Her Royal Highness wrote the warmest expression of gratitude for his solicitude for her comfort on her tour "in this wonderful and interesting country." Princess Christian continued to take the deepest interest in Milner's work and in the welfare and development of the great sub-continent, in which her son had found his last resting-place. "There is nothing," she

[1] When Lord Milner visited South Africa in 1924–5, he said, contemplating the remains of his development work, "We have made this country for the Boers. They never could have done it for themselves."

[2] Secretary to the Land Board, Orange River Colony, to whom was mainly due its success in providing for British agricultural settlers.

wrote, "I would not do at any time which lies in my humble power to help that wonderful country" (24/11/04).

Extract from Letter. H.R.H. Princess Christian to Lord Milner.

2/12/04. Christmas is close at hand, and so also is the beginning of the New Year, and I am writing to ask you to accept my best and warmest good wishes for them. May 1905 bring you *all* that is best, and health and strength and every blessing. I trust the new year may see your work prosper, and your hopes realized; and the good seed sown so abundantly bring forth fruit in abundance, and bring you the reward for such untiring devotion and self-sacrifice for the good of South Africa and our Empire. Forgive me if I have said too much, but I feel it with all my heart. I am venturing to enclose a wee little almanack for 1905, which may perhaps be of use at some time or other. . . .

CHAPTER XVI

Hail and Farewell

WHILST these things were being accomplished, Milner's thoughts were turning, as we have seen, towards his own release from harness and the choice of his successor. As early as February, 1904, he had written to the Prime Minister suggesting that a man of Cabinet rank, familiar with South African affairs, should be appointed. His own preference was steadily for Lyttelton or Selborne. But, if it was decided that the High Commissioner should be chosen from the Colonial Service, he was equally convinced that the choice should fall on Lawley.[1] Balfour was naturally unwilling to weaken his already shaken Cabinet, and it was doubtful whether Selborne would care to sacrifice the political career which was opening to him in other directions. Balfour and Lyttelton himself thought that the strong line the latter had taken in South African affairs as Colonial Secretary, notably in the matter of Chinese Labour, might render his position difficult and precarious, with a Liberal Government coming into power. Again and again, up to the end of the year, Milner urged Lyttelton to accept the position, and when he refused, argued with him to reconsider his decision (Milner Papers, XLV, i).

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Balfour.

10/2/04. [PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL] . . . I am firmly of opinion that, if I am to be succeeded by a man in the Colonial Service, Lawley is far the best man. But there is much to be said on appointing a first-class outsider. I think the importance of the place would justify the appointment of a man of Cabinet rank, and Lyttelton himself had thought of that. Now, as you know, in old days I myself always hoped to be succeeded by Lyttelton. What has since happened may make that impossible

[1] Sir A. Godley (Lord Kilbracken), Mr. George Wyndham, Lord Tennyson, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, and Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson were other possibilities considered. Failing Selborne or Lyttelton, the Prime Minister thought of Mr. James Lowther (Lord Ullswater) (Milner Papers, XXXIX, iii, 13).

now. He may be too much wanted at home, indeed I quite expect he is. Still I thought I might just say to you that, if it is not quite impossible, I think it would be a splendid thing for South Africa and the Empire. The only other outsider—by " outsider " I mean, of course, a man from outside the Colonial Service,—who I believe would perfectly suit, is Selborne. I hope the time is coming when at least two of the great outside posts, i.e. India and South Africa, will come to be regarded as interchangeable with high office at home. That would be of appreciable assistance in drawing closer the ties, which unite different parts of the Empire—the great problem always confronting us, which seems so fearfully difficult to solve in a practical way. As I told Lyttelton, I regard myself as merely holding on till you can select a good man to take my place. I have seen the new Colonies through their immediate economic crisis, and I shall have my plans for constitutional change ready by the end of the year. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

12/9/04. [MOST CONFIDENTIAL] . . . The greatest South African interest at this moment is that the next High Commissioner should be a man fit to cope with the extremely heavy work and most difficult problems which lie before him in the next few years. If I could in any way contribute to the selection of the right man, it would be the greatest service I can still render to South Africa and the Empire. . . .

In September Milner made a memorandum of a long letter to Lyttelton in which he combated the latter's reasons for not accepting the post :

11/9/04. . . . I had well considered the position, and was satisfied that it was best for me to retire in time to make it certain that the present Government would be able to appoint my successor. I was ready to send in a formal resignation, *based entirely on grounds of health*, at any moment, if a hint was given to me by him [Lyttelton] by letter or telegram. This to prevent any possible unforeseen accident defeating my intentions. . . .

He returned to the subject two months later :

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

30/11/04. . . . I have been *forced*, in these last few years, to pour out, to my own great exhaustion, perfect volumes of what I can only call private despatches. For I have been obliged to carry on my work here mainly by the method of *personal appeal*, with the machinery and routinery mostly against me, as it must

be against all innovators. Of course I should never have got on at all without men like Chamberlain and yourself behind me. . . . I still hope that you will reconsider your decision not to come here yourself. . . . I see blackness in front of this country, if we can't make a special effort to give it, just for a few years longer, the sort of man it wants. If you only came for two or three years, it would make all the difference. I always said to myself, it ought to be Selborne or you—you or Selborne. . . .

Extract from Telegram. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

17/1/05. . . . May I begin quietly to make my preparations for leaving in the second or third week in March? Unless there is some grave reason to the contrary, I am most anxious not to defer my departure.

Extract from Telegram. Mr. Lyttelton to Lord Milner.

17/1/05. We must not hold you a day longer than you wish, but your succession is proving a terrible difficulty. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. J. M. Rendel.

31/12/04. . . . My wishes for myself are summed up in the desire to get out of this. All you say is absolutely true. I am under no illusions about "finishing my job" here. It is like the heads of the hydra. I have cut off I don't know how many in the last 7 years, the latest not the least formidable. Since I got back here a year ago, we have *simply saved* the two Colonies economically. It was an awful fight, but the result is that the financial outlook is completely altered. Fresh follies might of course spoil it. They might spoil anything. But, as far as I am concerned, I shall leave that side of the business in good order, marvellously good order when you think what at one time we were threatened with. But, of course, as fast as one difficulty is overcome, up pops another. The next cause of anxiety is the foolish haste to get "representative" or "responsible Govt." Let others deal with that. I have practically fixed the end of March as my date for leaving here. I foresee an effort to make me alter it, but, except for a few days or weeks to square matters of personal convenience, I do not mean to budge. . . . Your Poor Law work must be very engrossing just now. I see from the papers that the "out of work" question is assuming a specially grave aspect this winter. . . . It is evident that the thing is not going to get less serious as the years go on. These problems—and those of Empire—are the only political questions which really matter. And they are, of course, intimately connected. . . .

As prophesied in the foregoing letter, pressure was still put upon Milner to remain in South Africa. He refused, replying to a message from Balfour (Feb. 8), that he could not "even contemplate the indefinite retention" of his present office. But he offered to alter his plans, and to keep his resignation in abeyance until he had seen the Prime Minister in March. It must, however, be on the distinct understanding that his resignation was only deferred, not withdrawn.

Extract from Telegram. Mr. Balfour to Lord Milner.

8/2/05. . . . The more I think of South African affairs, the more convinced I become that the interests of the Empire will be best served by your continuance in your office like Cromer for an indefinite period. . . . I find nothing in the state of politics either here or in South Africa which would prevent you from guiding the destinies of a country whose affairs you have conducted so long and so brilliantly. Three months' holiday and more if necessary could of course be arranged for you. . . .

Extract from Letter. Mr. Balfour to Lord Milner.

23/2/05. . . . On public grounds I was much grieved, though not much surprised, at the receipt of your telegram. My recollections of our conversations here a year and a half ago gave me little hope that you would find it possible to complete the work with whose commencement your name will always be inseparably associated. I do not presume to criticize your decision, which was necessarily caused by private, as well as public, considerations. But it is impossible for me not to lament the great loss which South Africa and the Empire will sustain by your withdrawal from the stage where you have won "name and fame." You will, I know, rejoice to hear that, as you were not available, we have succeeded in securing the services of Selborne.[1] He will be a dreadful loss to the Government and the Party here; but he will be a great gain to South Africa. He goes reluctantly, and out of a sense of public duty. I am confident that, great as the difficulties are with which he will have to deal, his judgment, courage, and ability will enable him to surmount them. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Balfour.

27/3/05. . . . It was the greatest possible relief to me to know that Selborne was my successor. . . . I was very sorry that I could not change my own resolution to retire in deference to your wishes. It is a real distress to me to refuse anything you ask,

[1] The formal announcement was made on March 1.

both for public and private reasons. Your kindness to me has been invariable. Besides, I feel very strongly indeed, that I have been magnificently backed both by you and Lyttelton, at a time when backing me cost the Government much. We have turned out to be entirely in the right, but that makes no difference. The Government will have to suffer for being in the right, I fear, just as much as if it had been entirely in the wrong. . . .

When it became known that he was about to leave South Africa, a hush fell upon the storm of cavillings and criticisms which had recently been pouring upon Milner and his work. Men of all parties suddenly remembered what South Africa owed to him, and realized what he had been doing to lay for them the foundations of a new national life within the Empire. In a stream of letters and addresses, public and private, they gave expression to their thankfulness for what he had achieved, and admiration for his ceaseless courtesy and patience. All sorts and conditions of men and women, Dutch as well as English, white and coloured folk, Ministers of the Church and sons of the soil, as well as officials and members of the Colonial Governments, all expressed their regret at his departure, and testified to his singleminded and self-acrificing devotion to their interests.[1] The three following letters, selected from a host, are of special interest :

Extract from Letter. (Sir) Percy Fitzpatrick to Lord Milner.

22/2/05. . . . I see by the cables that you leave South Africa at the end of March—Well, it would be a graceless and miserable thing to say anything so selfish as "regret." Just now there are two other things that one feels infinitely more strongly and more unselfishly too. First that you have given us more—far more—than we had any right or reason to expect. How you have lasted, I don't know. Second, that you have triumphed. If you are human you must know the feeling yourself. Well, we have it too, on your behalf because you have done it, on our own because—with a touch of conceit, it seems the splendid vindication of our faith in you. . . . *You* don't know the feeling of gratitude and relief that we felt—almost bewildering relief—when the Graaff-Reinet speech removed the load of doubt and perplexity, and gave to the faith that was in our blood and our bones the chance to rise again and bear its fruit. . . . It made a world of difference to be able to believe again, and feel that at last we had to deal with one who saw clearly and would hold fast. When I think of it all—the tremendousness of the task—the ignorance, conceit, bogus

[1] Milner Papers, XL, ii, 4.

magnanimity and unpreparedness in England, the disloyalty, obstruction, folly, and weakness of allies; the exposure of concrete foundations as sand and sawdust; the trickery, jealousy and lying intrigues and abuse; the folly and ingratitude, stupidity and impatience of many whose interests and very existence as a people you were fighting hard to secure; when I think of the decision in November last to hold on to the very end, in the face of inevitable unpopularity, discontent, and misrepresentation—all foreseen and frankly faced—Well, the splendid triumph over all makes my head swim; it seems too wonderful now that it is done.

Of course the Boers hate you; it is their certificate of your success. The greatest trial—to me—was the failing of faith and patience among our own folks. It was sad and it used to make me hot with shame and sick with anxiety; a feeling that the family escutcheon was being tarnished and those whom one had guaranteed were going back. That bit into me more than any other thing. To one of your best supporters, who was getting overcritical and not seeing that his candour was more harmful than hostility (to say nothing of his ideas being all wrong) I wrote once, "You will pay him a handsome tribute—when he's dead!" Rhodes had one such supporter once, and his characteristic comment was "You can go—but go for good. Don't come back. I want support while I'm alive. I don't want any of your post-mortem snivellings." . . . No public man has ever had so difficult a task, and so often to do unpopular things and maintain a reasoned resistance to unreasoning sentiment; to defend the actions of higher authority and the failure of subordinates in bad and trying times, and *still* preserved such an immense hold upon the loyalty, confidence and affectionate regard of such a community. . . .

I suppose you will be leaving a week or two after this reaches you, so this is good-bye to you as Trusted and Beloved Chief—no less. I have not the words to say what I feel about it all, but you may measure part by this—that before you came to us I and many others were sick at heart, and crushed by the thought that the Occasion had come, but there was to be no Man, and that with the loss of South Africa would begin the break-up of our glorious Empire. Another and the smaller part is just personal, gratitude for the splendid example of courage which helped to hold us together, and for your never-failing patience, kindness and friendship. . . .

Extract from Letter. General J. C. Smuts to Lord Milner.

2/4/05. . . . Will you allow me to wish you "Bon Voyage" now that you are leaving South Africa for ever? I am afraid you

have not liked us ; but I cherish the hope that, as our memories grow mellower and the nobler features of our respective ideals become clearer, we shall more and more appreciate the contribution of each to the formation of that happier South Africa which is surely coming, and judge more kindly of each other. At any rate it is a consolation to think what is noble in our work will grow to larger issues than we foresaw, and that even our mistakes will be covered up ultimately, not only in a merciful oblivion, but also in that unconscious forgiveness which seems to me to be an inherent feature of all historical growth. History writes the word "Reconciliation" over all her quarrels, and will surely write it over the unhappy differences which have agitated us in the past. What is good in our work is not disposed of in the present, but can safely appeal to the ear of the future. To that ear you have appealed ; so do we. Who knows but that there our respective contentions will reach a friendly settlement which no one foresees to-day. Once more, health and strength and useful years I wish you. . . .

Extract from Letter. King of Barotseland to Lord Milner.

23/5/05. DEAR LORD, I am sorry to hear that you have left already to England from hearsay, but when I hear that I was very very sorry. . . . When your letter reached here which said now you leave the country then another man will take your place, I was very sorry with all my people how shall that will suppose is only coming to look after the white people not to take care for the black people. I enclose my short letter with respectfully salutations, I beg to be your little friend, LEWANIKA.

Unique in their expression of mutual affection and esteem are the letters which passed between Milner and his Chief :

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

13/3/05. . . . I cannot thank you enough for Selborne. . . . I don't know whether I have ever told you, how much I feel what I owe you, and—what is much more important—that South Africa and the Empire owe you. In addition to a number of personal kindnesses, which I do not appreciate the less because I have grown so used to them from you, there has been your strong and constant backing on the difficult big questions. Many people here do not realize, but I *know*, what a terrible Old Man of the Sea South Africa has been to the present Government. The way they have stuck to the job—*thanks to you*—when it was visibly threatening their existence, and there was no compensation at all in the shape of any kind of score or success or satisfaction, has been really splendid. You must have had a horrible time over it with your

own colleagues, and in an imperfect world "mens conscia recti" is not always a complete consolation or adequate tonic. Nor do I know that the complete understanding, appreciation and gratitude of one insignificant being are much use. But whether they are or are not, they exist, and I may as well tell you so. . . .

Officially the Secretary of State sent a telegram recognizing "the steadfast courage" with which Milner had "confronted the issues of war and, scarcely less momentous, the problem of ensuing peace"; and recording that he had "laid deep and strong the foundations upon which a united South Africa will arise to become one of the great States of the Empire." [1]

Extract from Letter. Mr. Lyttelton to Lord Milner.

9/4/05. [PRIVATE] . . . I am glad that you liked my telegram of farewell on behalf of the Govt. I think you know that it was really felt; and that its appreciation was unforced and genuine of the great work which you have devoted health and all else to during these eight years. . . . There has been a vast deal of trouble and unpopularity about the Transvaal, but it has been trouble that I have loved to take, and unpopularity I have been proud to face. No one can ever know what a deep pleasure it has been to work with you and under your inspiration. I shall ever treasure your last letter to me, and feel that I have not lived quite in vain if I deserve a fraction only of what you are so generous as to say. . . . I can imagine no higher ambition or pleasure than some day again, old man, to be your colleague in a big enterprise. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mr. Lyttelton.

2/4/05. . . . There is one thing I must say to-day and it is in the nature of an apology. I have stolen one of your best men—G. G. Robinson. My excuse is that I have really only stolen him in the public interest. He got so keen about the problems of this country, knew them so well, and was so popular with all sections, that it seemed to me a thousand pities to take him out of the small garrison of absolutely sound Britishers in Johannesburg. I know you will feel the loss of him at the Colonial Office. . . . He has been offered and has, under my strong advice, accepted, the editorship of the *Star*,[2] the leading Johannesburg newspaper. . . .

Milner made his final bow, as he termed it, in a trilogy of valedictory speeches. At Germiston, on March 15, he reviewed the work accomplished in the Transvaal, and the financial and in-

[1] 29/3/05. Cd. 2482, p. 155.

[2] Mr. Geoffrey Robinson (Dawson) succeeded Mr. W. B. Worsfold.

dustrial outlook of the Colony. Here and at a farewell banquet at Pretoria (March 22), he defended the Administration against the alternating criticisms which had been levelled against it, first for extravagance and recklessness when things had had to be done in a hurry, in the " terrific effort to drag this country out of chaos directly after the war," and then for parsimony and sloth, when industrial depression had rendered retrenchment imperative. Now he could say that " the finances of the country, including the finances of the railways," were in absolute order, and he could leave the Colony without a vestige of anxiety as to its ability to pay its way. At Pretoria he paid a tribute to his fellow-workers, by whom he had been " most loyally and ably served," refusing to accept the invidious criticism which had endeavoured to distinguish between his acts and policy and those of his subordinates.[1] " Before the tribunal of posterity," he exclaimed, " as in the struggles of to-day, we will stand or fall together. And I for one, have no fear whatever of the verdict which any impartial chronicler will pronounce on our work as a whole. It is rough work, no doubt, a great deal of it. There has been no time for trimming or polishing. But if rough, and showing many traces of haste, it is solid, and bears few traces of scamping. Much of it has been costly work, but then one has always to pay extra for extra pace, and we have been going full steam ahead the whole time. The one thing essential, the one thing imperative, when we took over this country, a total wreck, with half its population in exile, with no administrative machinery whatever, and, as far as the plant of government was concerned, with the scantiest equipment of any civilized country in the world, was to make it a going concern again as soon as possible. We could not stand fiddling over small economies while people starved. . . . I say the work has been rough and the work has been costly. But, after all, the great feature of it, the fact that will stand out in history, and which has in our day at any rate no parallel, is the colossal amount which has been done in the time." . . .

In a later passage, he described some of the results : People take many things as a matter of course, which, nevertheless, are only the result of the most constant watchfulness, of the most strenuous labour—the profound peace which reigns throughout

[1] It was not the least of Milner's gifts to South Africa that he was able by his influence and example to equip the new Colonies at the outset with a clean, efficient and enthusiastic Civil Service.

a country so lately the scene of a devastating struggle ; the Statute Book no longer an unintelligible jumble, but reduced to reasonable proportions and in an orderly form ; the steady, incorruptible administration of justice under a Supreme Court which has no superior in any British Colony ; the return of our principal industry to its old prosperity ; the new life which is being infused into agriculture ; the starting of experimental farms ; the introduction of high-class stock ; the planting of forests, the municipal institutions, as liberal as any in the world, which have now been created throughout the whole of the Colony ; the free schools containing twice as many children as at any previous period ; the new provisions for higher technical training ; the ensuring of an adequate water supply for your greatest centre of population ; the careful scientific study now for the first time being devoted to the great problem of irrigation in all its branches. . . .

To these were added the enormous development of railways, telegraphs and telephones. In addition, " The Lunatic Asylum, which was a disgrace, is being replaced by one of exceptional excellence. Several new hospitals have been built, several existing hospitals greatly improved, and a large further sum has been allotted for hospital construction. New prisons have been built, and existing prisons have been enlarged. . . . Immense sums have been spent on the improvement of roads in the country districts, which were never good, and at the end of the war were in a really shocking condition. Twenty-two solid permanent bridges have been constructed. Add to this the innumerable minor works which are going on in every part of the country, the police barracks, the Government Office, the Magistrates' houses and so on." . . .

The last and most famous of these three speeches, classic in its intensity and fruitfulness in phrase and thought, was delivered at Johannesburg on March 31. It has been published in Lord Milner's book, " The Nation and the Empire." [1] For an hour and twenty minutes he held an audience of nearly 1,000 men and women spell-bound whilst he said what he had to say " quite mercilessly " as he put it, " without adornment or relief." There were passages in the speech which he knew must be unpopular ; there were dull passages, fighting passages. The thoughts were so tight-packed that they left no room for oratorical flourishes. But never for a moment did the speaker lose the attention and the sympathy of his audience. The stark sincerity of the man, his

[1] Edited by Charles Boyd.

utter unselfishness in devotion to the cause he had served and the still greater cause with which it was bound up, shone through every word, and earned the admiration and respect of every listener, even where it did not command assent. In this speech he turned to wider political issues, whilst appealing for the continuance of those enterprises, "which owe their origin almost entirely to my own personal initiative and insistence, and which are almost all more or less in danger." He enumerated and explained these "fads of Milner"—land settlement, afforestation, irrigation, the scientific study of agriculture, the Inter-colonial Council, the South African Constabulary, the amalgamation of the railways. "If you believe in me," he pleaded, "defend my works when I am gone. I care for that much more than I do for eulogy, or indeed for any personal reward. I shall live in the memories of people here," he added, "if I live at all, in connection with the great struggle to keep this country within the limits of the British Empire. Certainly I engaged in the struggle with all my might, because I was from head to foot one mass of glowing conviction of the rightness of our cause. But a frightfully destructive conflict of that kind is at the best a sad business to look back upon. I should prefer to be remembered for the tremendous effort, wise or unwise in various particulars, made after the war, not only to repair its ravages, but also to restart the new Colonies on a far higher plane of civilization than they had ever previously attained. To that work I devoted myself with equal energy, and certainly with far greater sympathy with what I had to do."

Then, after referring to the new Constitution, the demand for responsible government, the attitude of the Boers, and his own unpopular views on the "colour" question, he concluded with a famous passage on the future of South Africa and the Empire: "It is the point which I care most about, because it is over all and embracing all. What I pray for hardest is, that those with whom I have worked in a great struggle, and who may attach some weight to my words, should remain faithful, faithful above all in the period of reaction, to the great ideal of Imperial Unity. Shall we ever live to see its fulfilment? Whether we do or not, whether we succeed or fail, I shall always be steadfast in that faith, though I should prefer to work quietly and in the background, in the formation of opinion rather than in the exercise of power. The question as I see it, the question of the future of the Empire, is a race, a close race between the many influences manifestly

making for disruption, and the growth of a great but as yet very imperfectly realized conception.

"The words 'Empire' and 'Imperial' are perhaps in some respects unfortunate. They seem to suggest domination, ascendancy, the rule of a superior State over vassal States: but, as they are the only words available, we must just make the best of them, and try to raise them in the scale of language by giving them a new significance. When we who call ourselves Imperialists talk of the British Empire, we think of a group of States, all independent in their own local concerns, but all united for the defence of their own common interests and the development of a common civilization; united, not in an alliance—for alliances can be made and unmade, and are never more than nominally lasting—but in a permanent organic union. Of such a union the dominions of our Sovereign as they exist to-day, are, we fully admit, only the raw material. Our ideal is still distant, but we deny that it is either visionary or unattainable. And see how such a consummation would solve, and, indeed, can alone solve, the most difficult and the most persistent of the problems of South Africa; how it would unite its white races as nothing else can. The Dutch can never own a perfect allegiance merely to Great Britain. The British can never, without moral injury, accept allegiance to any body politic which excludes their motherland. But British and Dutch alike could, without loss of integrity, without any sacrifice of their several traditions, unite in loyal devotion to an Empire-State, in which Great Britain and South Africa would be partners, and could work cordially together for the good of South Africa as a member of that greater whole. And so, you see, the true Imperialist is also the best South African.

"The road is long, the obstacles are many, the goal may not be reached in my lifetime—perhaps not in that of any man in this room. You cannot hasten the slow growth of a great idea like that by any forcing process. But what you can do is to keep it steadily in view, to lose no opportunity to work for it, to resist like grim death any policy that leads away from it. I know that the service of that idea requires the rarest combination of qualities, a combination of ceaseless effort with infinite patience. But then think, on the other hand, of the greatness of the reward; the immense privilege of being allowed to contribute in any way to the fulfilment of one of the noblest conceptions which has ever dawned on the political imagination of mankind."

CHAPTER XVII

The Reward

LORD MILNER'S departure from Johannesburg was the occasion of a remarkable demonstration of feeling. Every considerable town in South Africa had sent its Mayor or some leading citizen to say Good-bye to the High Commissioner. On Sunday, April 2, thousands of people assembled at the railway station to bid him farewell. As he drove to the station through streets lined with volunteers and escorted by guards of honour, a terrific storm broke over the city. Deluges of rain fell, accompanied by thunder and lightning, which would have damped the ardour of a less eager crowd. But the large station was filled to capacity. "As the train steamed out," Milner wrote to a friend, "I was standing on an open stoep at the end of the last carriage—the great crowd rushed down from the platform on both sides into the centre of the line, and the last thing I saw of Johannesburg was a dense mass of frantically excited people, waving hats and handkerchiefs, which filled railway, platform and everything from embankment to embankment and stretched as far back as my eyes could carry me." . . .

Milner sailed for Europe from Delagoa Bay, paying a fleeting visit to Nairobi by the new railway, as the guest of the Governor, Sir Donald Stewart. "The sight of the great game plains," he wrote, "where were simply thousands of antelope, zebras, ostriches, etc., grazing around, all easily visible from the cow-catcher, where we were seated in front of the engine, and the further sight of Kilimanjaro at sunset—we got a very fine view of the huge snow-crowned mountain from a distance of over a hundred miles—it seemed hardly fifty—will be unique memories. Very wonderful all this." . . .

The party on the cow-catcher consisted of Lord Milner, Sir Donald Stewart, Mr. W. J. Monson, Secretary of the Administration, and Mr. Geoffrey Dawson. The story runs that at a

game of bridge on this occasion both Governors revoked, but that, such were the tact and devotion of the respective Secretaries, each in turn refrained from exposing the error of his Chief!

For the remainder of the voyage Milner followed the same route as on his previous leave. For he was determined to take the rest which his health urgently demanded, before committing himself to any business, whether public or private. Firmly he refused the many invitations to engage in the one or the other. Offers reached him from several publishers, including one suggestion for writing the Life of Disraeli.[1] As to that, Milner's answer was that, if ever he felt tempted to take up his pen again, it would be after the long rest he needed, and in order to draw from his own experiences some profit and instruction for others, who might venture hereafter on similar enterprises.

Lord Roberts, as President of the National Service League, wrote begging for his active support. Many felt with him that Milner was marked out as the man to lead a Nation then newly aware of a call to meet the service and duties demanded by the Imperial idea. But Milner was not prepared to embark immediately even upon the task of converting the Nation to National Service, although later on he became, with Lord Roberts, the leader of the movement.

Extract from Letter. Major-General Sir Fabian Ware[2] *to Lord Milner.*

28/6/05. . . . We want you to come and lead us to put this country straight. "We" is a large majority of people who only want leading to do one of the biggest things this country has seen. During the four years I have been out of England *nothing* has been done by the Government, but the people have learnt enormously. They are sound—far sounder than the Germans—though I have never thought so before. They have learnt their defects all round—in education, defence and everything else—and it is really pathetic to see them groping about for a solution. The desire is very deep among the thinking people. I know many of them who are forming themselves informally into a sort of *Jugendbund*, depriving themselves unostentatiously of all sorts of little luxuries, believing that the necessary sacrifice should begin in this way. . . .

Sir Clinton Dawkins had long been urging him to return to

[1] In one of his last letters, Disraeli predicted that within twenty years we should have a life struggle in South Africa.

[2] At that time Editor of the *Morning Post*.

England and enter the political arena as a leader in the campaign for Imperial Federation and Defence.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Sir Clinton Dawkins.

21/4/04. . . . What has been steadily growing in my mind for years, has now attained the force of a conviction and a resolution. And that is that, *tout bonnement*, I will not go on with political life in the ordinary sense of the word, when I am freed from this dungeon. I WILL NOT. What I may do is quite uncertain and I decline, until I have had my long holiday, even to consider it. But I am too far, too increasingly, as the years go on, out of sympathy with our political system, and with the political attitude of the bulk of my countrymen, to be a successful politician in the ordinary sense. I am an anachronism. It may be I was born too late, it may be I was born too soon. In the latter, I think the less probable, case, I may be of some use in politics—as an outsider, though never again as an active participant in the fray. But I am not going to make myself miserable any more, or to embarrass any Ministry or party, by holding office on the terms, on which under the conditions of our day it can alone be held. Every man can afford to hold *some* unpopular ideas. But I have amassed *all the most unpopular*. I hold, with real conviction, a whole posse of them, and I mean to allow myself the luxury of holding, perhaps even of occasionally expressing them. . . .

Whilst on board, and looking forward eagerly to his hard-earned holiday, Milner's thoughts still turned back to South Africa. In two remarkable memoranda, designed to help his successor in the difficult task which he had left for him, he condensed the results of his own severe experience, and added appreciations of the personnel of the Administration.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Lord Selborne.

14/4/05. [STRICTLY PRIVATE] . . . People think the War decided that South Africa should remain for good and all part of the British Empire. I never took that view. Certainly, unless we had asserted ourselves—with war as an almost certain result—we should have lost South Africa. But success in the war did not mean that we should necessarily keep her. It only made that result *possible*—at most probable. To make it certain, requires years of strong, patient policy, the principal danger in this as in all our Imperial problems, being, of course, at home. Without the tomfoolery of home party politics interfering with a sane Imperial policy, we should be safe, I think. But we cannot afford

much *practical* "pro-Boerism." Pro-Boer talk is bad enough. The Boers meanwhile will give you a good reception—certainly in the new Colonies, probably in the Cape too. They are clever enough for that. As you will not be taken in by it, this is a *great initial advantage*, one of the many reasons, why a change now, provided a good man could be induced to come, was for the best. The change of Governors enables them, not only to pretend to be less hostile, but actually to adopt a somewhat less aggressive policy, for it had almost become a point of honour with them to oppose me and all my works. There is great practical disadvantage in such chronic friction, though it is better than peace bought by damaging concessions; and I believe you will be able, at any rate at first, to put through with comparative ease a number of things which I could only have got done at all by an artificially enormous expenditure of energy.

When I say, that you won't be taken in by them, I mean about essentials. It would need the wisdom of an Archangel not to be taken in about particular questions. I never learnt, to my last hour, to distrust them every time, and about everything, though I have never, on any single occasion, got anything but disappointment from trusting them, except on matters, such as not rebelling without arms and not making a row at the Kruger funeral, in which it was quite obviously their game to behave themselves. You may generally rely upon them to do that, when the policy of so doing is transparently the right one in their own interest. And you may always rely upon them to be perfectly charming in their duplicity,—with an air of manly frankness which must, one would think, take in anybody, and is bound to take in any Englishman worthy of the name. . . . Of course, in what I have just said, I am not speaking of the bulk of the Boer people, of the farming class, but of the political Boers, the Afrikander party, with whom you will principally come in contact, and who will leave no stone unturned, to make you see through their spectacles.

The Afrikander party—it does not always call itself by that name, and it is not what we should call a "party," but something much more formidable—is an all-pervading political force throughout South Africa—the same everywhere in spirit, aim *and method*, and working together instinctively on the same lines and for the same ends, with or *without* formal organization. There has been a good deal of idle speculation, whether the political Afrikanders of the new Colonies were going to join the Bond. It does not matter. The Bond is in their hearts; they will do as the Bond does and always has done, whether they are outwardly labelled Bondsmen or not. You may not realize this homogeneity at once, but assuredly you will in time. No doubt there are many bitter differences dividing

the political Afrikanders—not always local differences—but personal jealousies, antipathies, divisions of opinion as to tactics. But, as I say, in their aim, and broadly speaking, in their method, also, they are absolutely alike. It does not matter, whether it is *Ons Land*, *Friend*, or *Volksstem*, whether it is X or Y or Z. Behind all the masks, speaking through all the voices, is the same informing spirit, always working for the same end, *always working in the same way*, though, of course, more or less skilfully, more or less effectively, according to the particular circumstances and the particular actor.

Two things alone I will say about them. I need not tell you what their creed and ideal is—that of a separate Afrikander nation and State, comprising, no doubt, men of other races, who are ready to be "afrikanderized," but essentially autochthonous, isolated and un-British, though some of them are prepared to see their object realized, for a time at least, under the British flag. But what you may not quite appreciate from a distance is, (1) that the Afrikander doctrine emanates essentially from the towns and the non-agricultural middle class, and is "pumped into" the country Boers, and (2) that its weapons are, and must be, mainly duplicity and deceit. It is quite certain that, but for the influence of parsons, doctors, attorneys, law-agents, journalists, and the more educated and town-frequenting of their own class, the country Boers as a body would not be irreconcilable. They are traditionally adverse to the British, and suspicious of strangers and innovations. But, left to themselves, they could gradually, and indeed pretty quickly, be won over by a sympathetic policy, especially careful of their material interests, and tender to their prejudices, and by the right sort of British Administrator.

On a small scale, and for a limited period, I have seen the experiment succeed over and over again. But then comes in the Afrikander Propaganda. The votaries of the Afrikander cult cannot, for dear life, allow the suspicion and distrust of everything British in the hearts of their fellow-countrymen to be in any way mitigated. It would go to the root of their whole policy, for, without the shaft, which the bulk of the Boer country population supplies, the poisoned arrowhead could effect nothing. By hook or by crook, by every means fair or foul, by any and every *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi*, the country people must be kept in, or brought back to, their attitude of hatred and distrust. And so far they have been successfully so kept or brought back in almost every instance.

The means adopted are sometimes truly startling. They involve often not merely monstrous lying—one is too used to that to take much notice—but the vigorous squelching of schemes of material development, by which the very men, who seek to mar them, would

be themselves directly benefited. And the joke is, that, all the time, the men, who are at the bottom of the mischief, are pretending to you and me that they deplore it. They sympathize with our objects. They are only so sorry that, owing to the unfortunate prejudices of their own countrymen, they fear we cannot succeed. Yet all the time they are themselves creating or keeping up these prejudices, and putting a spoke in the wheel of the policy, with which in certain respects, they pretend to be in accord. And, perhaps, they sometimes really are in accord with it, but for its one, in their eyes, fatal defect, i.e. that it comes from us, and might, if carried through, win for us popular support and sympathy. That, of course, is only one instance of the radical duplicity, in which all Afrikander policy is involved. They are "British citizens," and fully prepared to take every advantage of that position, yet they are working against everything British. Almost every phrase, which they use, and they have many alluring phrases, has a double meaning, a popular one for consumption by you and me or at home, and an esoteric one, which is wholly different, if not opposite. "Si non armis, attamen arte," and arms just now are not to be got, and may, if the art is adequate, be altogether superfluous. . . .

I turn to the "Sphere of Influence" of the High Commissioner outside all his definite duties. His prestige is enormous. In all general South African questions he occupies a *traditional* position of undefined authority and influence, of which you can find no trace in his "Commission," and to which the student of mere constitutional forms will never discover the clue. Of course, he has to be careful not to interfere in the purely local concerns (but query, what is purely local?) of the Colonies not directly under him, though he is often appealed to even on these. The jealousy of him in this regard is far less than it was. But in matters of interest common to several or all of the Colonies, he is the only man to whom one can appeal—the presumably impartial arbiter. And these matters are constantly growing in number and importance. But so is the mutual jealousy, not to say dislike, of the Colonies towards one another.

The more co-operation is called for by circumstances, the more furiously does the intense local "patriotism"—to give it a good name—of the several States rebel against its necessary concomitants. Everybody clamours for union, everybody recognizes, in the abstract, its desirability, yet everybody kicks violently against the inevitable sacrifices of local self-containedness which it involves. It is the High Commissioner's prestige and personal influence, which can alone prevent, as it often has prevented, bad quarrels, and forced the jealous rivals, *nolentes volentes*, into compromise and

common action. But I need not tell you it is a game, which needs the wariest walking, and some sacrifice of personal popularity. The Transvaal is peculiarly self-assertive, the other Colonies are madly jealous of the Transvaal, and have the most ridiculous fear, sedulously fostered, of course, by the Afrikander politicians, of the Rand and its money-bags. . . . The principal causes of difference between the Colonies are questions of commerce and business. They are questions of railways, rates, through routes, new constructions, etc., or of tariffs and such-like. They divide the industrial and commercial sections of the several States—i.e. *the British.* They do not divide the Dutch of the several Colonies from one another in at all an equal degree, for the Dutch are not by any means equally interested in them. As long as they can pursue their own great object, which is *a political* one, undivided, it is naturally " nuts " to them to see the other side split up over non-political matters, with which the British population are, except on a great emergency, generally much more concerned than they are with high questions of Policy. . . . A lot of plants are growing, which only require a few years more protection to have struck (such) roots that it will be difficult to tear them up. Unfortunately, some of the most useful things we are doing are far from being the most popular, or from being popular at all. They will need your special protection, if they are to survive the attacks of deliberate malice, or mere empty-headed superficiality, as they have needed mine.

The most important of these is the whole work of the agricultural departments, and, what is closely allied with it, land settlement. It is natural enough, that the political Boers should be hostile to the latter, and their organ in the Orange River Colony, the *Friend*, has announced their intention of squelching it as soon as they get responsible government. But it is a little disappointing that our efforts at agricultural improvement, which after all will benefit ten Boers to one Briton, have met with so little encouragement and recognition from those chiefly interested. I do not say they have met with *none*, and I am firmly convinced that in time they will become generally popular. But it does require time, all the more since what we are doing in this direction is so very thorough, and, because thorough and scientific, not so showy or so productive of rapid results as more superficial work would be. What I say about agriculture in this respect applies also to the cognate work of Irrigation. The foundations are being carefully and scientifically laid. Indeed as far as the fostering by Government of the productive industries of the country is concerned, there is nothing that I know of in any British Colony, *except Canada*, at all comparable to what is being done in the new Colonies. Chemistry, botany,

bacteriology, are all being pressed into the service. In South Africa, with its self-satisfied empiricism, all this is absolutely new, and at first unwelcome. The South Africans, British just as much as Dutch, will snort at your scientific agriculturists, who "know nothing about South Africa, and come to teach them their business." And certainly theoretic knowledge requires local experience to complete it, but then no one knows that better than the scientific man himself. This work will be recognized in time, but till it has had time, it needs a powerful protector.

As regards Land Settlement, meaning especially the introduction of British settlers on the land, I can only say that, as far as it has gone—and unfortunately it has not gone far—it has justified, and more than justified, my extreme keenness about it. It has been fearfully difficult (1) to get hold of the right class of settlers, (2) to get suitable land for them, and, (3) to tide them over the inevitable disasters and disappointments of their first few years. But wherever all these difficulties are successfully surmounted, you have a most valuable result. The few hundred really satisfactory settlers are of an importance wholly out of proportion to their numbers. The man, who thinks we intended to outnumber the Boers on the land, is an ass. But a greater ass is he who thinks that it is no use attempting to leaven, because you can't outnumber them. . . .

The future of Land Settlement is dark, because it needs money, because the money, devoted to the purpose, which was never sufficient, is mostly spent, and the balance likely to be stolen to make up for deficits on other heads of the Guaranteed Loan—such as "Repatriation," because no "representative Legislature" will ever vote more money for such a purpose, and because private individuals will never go in for a thing, which, as *an investment*, is at best only just remunerative, and is often not remunerative at all. Two things, however, we can do, and they are, in my humble judgment, among the most important things to be done in the near future. One is to protect the British settlers we have already got from being squeezed out—and some of them are not a little frightened of being squeezed out—when the administration passes into less sympathetic hands. Their position, which would be a precarious one under Responsible Government, must be safeguarded before Responsible Government is introduced. And the other thing is to make sure that the money invested in Land Settlement, as it comes back to the Government, by the repayment in instalments of capital invested in land or advanced to settlers, is again devoted to its original purpose, and not allowed to be swallowed up as ordinary Revenue. The Two Millions, or thereabouts now sticking in the business, may not be nearly enough, but if they can be kept as a Permanent Fund for that object, and

used over and over again, they will in time make a considerable impression.

On the whole, we have done more, up to date, in the Orange River Colony, than in the Transvaal. Goold-Adams is thoroughly sympathetic, and we have been lucky in finding in the Orange River Colony a *most excellent* man to run the business in the person of Major Apthorpe, a retired military officer, *whom I would most specially recommend to you*, not only as a capable agent, but as a good and experienced adviser in the matter. He is an enthusiast for his job. In the Transvaal you will find Adam Jameson, the Commissioner of Lands, is the man who knows most about it, and is most zealous in the good cause.

The Inter-Colonial Council. The whole Inter-Colonial arrangement, which is a sort of inchoate Federation of the two new Colonies, is my child, but it was not invented as a political experiment, but to meet certain practical difficulties and dangers which I saw no other way to get over. Wholly new situations require new policies, and new forms of constitution. But no doubt any arrangement like this, which has (1) no precedent, (2) requires to be developed, as you go along, (it is not to be expected, in fact it is not possible, that one should discover at one blow the exactly right type of new constitution, any more than in the case of a new kind of ship), I say any arrangement of that sort is particularly difficult to perfect successfully. The public are critical of something they are not used to, and don't quite understand the reasons for. And then in this case, the Colonial Office, whose constant co-operation was necessary, to gradually get the thing into suitable shape, were used to certain well-known forms and systems, and were bothered by something quite unlike any of them. The only way to really make a thing of that kind a success would be to allow the inventor of the machine to carry out *all* the alterations, which he found to be necessary in working it, without interference. But this, no doubt, was expecting too much. Anyway the Colonial Office, though I was able to carry them a long way, have been unable to go the whole way with me, and have botched the business.

I have fought hard to get borrowing powers for the Inter-Colonial Council, but have failed, and it is quite evident to me that, without borrowing powers, it is doomed. The Railways are the biggest by far of our growing enterprises: they will need more and more money for extensions. But if that money cannot be raised by the quasi-federal Assembly, which controls them, and that body has to go cap in hand to the local Legislatures to provide it, that at once gives the local Legislatures a voice, and the controlling voice, in the matter of railways, which was just

what the Inter-colonial system was invented to prevent. The local Legislatures will be only too glad to avail themselves of this power, for the spirit of intense particularism is dominant in both of them. There is nothing which is more popular, not only with the Legislatures, but the public, of both the new Colonies, than to pull the amalgamated railway system to pieces and then each use its own piece as a weapon against the other. Absolutely idiotic, of course, and, in the long run, disastrous,—but popular. The longer-headed men, like Farrar, see the folly of it, and will do their best to prevent it. But the clap-trap orator . . . can always raise a cheer by representing the Inter-colonial system as a withdrawal of the railways from " popular " control, which is, of course, nonsense, and get a mandate for quarrelling with it. If Inter-colonial business could have kept *rigidly apart*, as it was always my intention that it should be kept, from the business of the local Legislatures, neither party being able to interfere with the other ; if, therefore, the discussion of railway matters could have been ruled out as absolutely *ultra vires* in the local Legislatures, the scheme would have worked all right, and its obvious immense advantages would have gradually reconciled people to it. But with this unfortunate decision practically forcing us to bring railway questions, at any rate when our present funds are exhausted, before the local Legislatures, and that under conditions which make them masters of the situation, the whole hand is evidently spoiled.

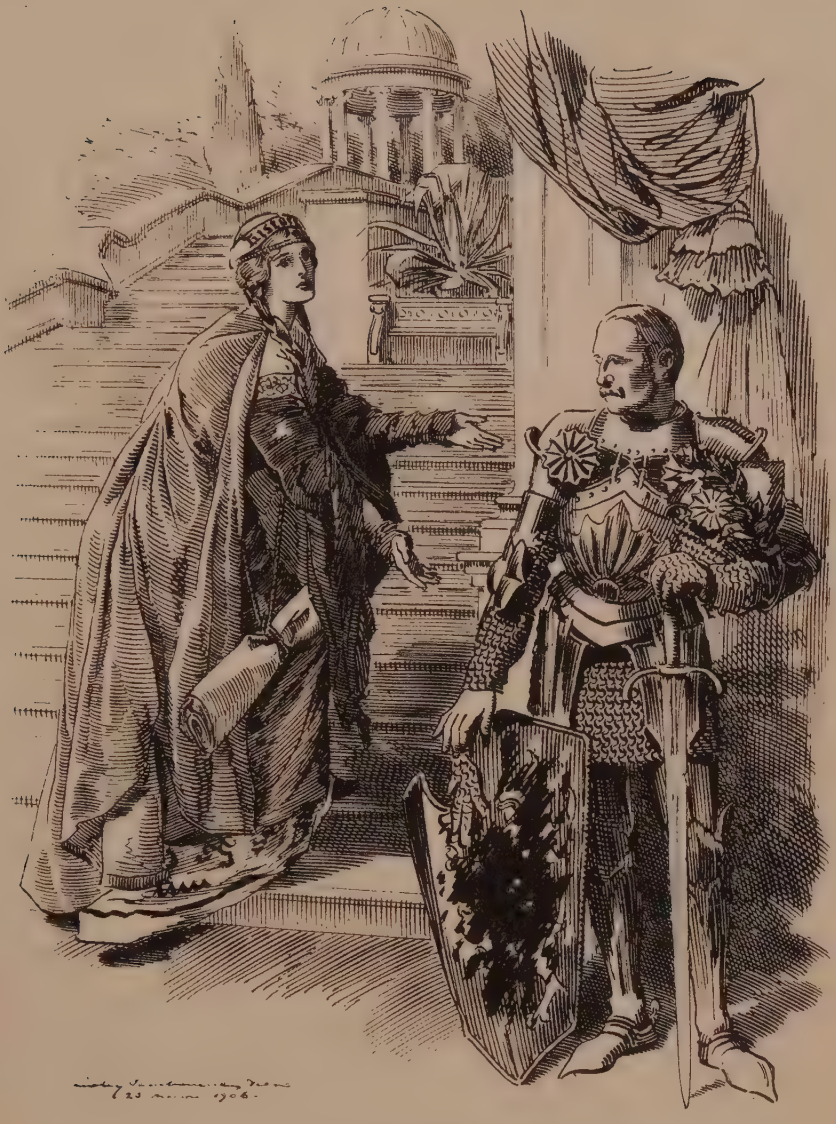
The big political objects, therefore, which I had at the back of my mind, when I started the Inter-Colonial Council, must be regarded as definitely defeated. It is not even worth while to expound them. But a good deal may, I think, with skilful management, be saved from the wreck. In the first place it seems to me that, in spite of the impending exhaustion of Loan Funds, we shall, in view of the great expansion of railway revenue, be able to carry on our railway extensions for a considerable time to come, perhaps even, going slowly, to complete the present programme without appealing to either of the local Legislatures to assist us in raising a loan. Now if two or three years can be gained in that way, the amalgamated railway system will be in a much stronger position than it is to-day. People will have got used to it, and will shy rather than otherwise at the *inconveniences* of separation. Moreover, the advantage of a general amalgamation of all South African Railways, which is evident to every practical student of the subject, and which at the recent Railway Conference at Johannesburg began to dawn even on the representatives of our exceedingly " particularist " public, will by that time have converted a great many people in all the Colonies to the idea of going

forward rather than backward in railway policy, and then the end of the Inter-Colonial Council, as far as the railways are concerned, may be to merge in some body even wider,—such as a Railway Commisson for the whole of South Africa.

As regards the control of the South African Constabulary by the Inter-Colonial Council, another subject of grievance to our local patriots on both sides of the Vaal, I frankly admit that, now that the bigger political objects prompting me to suggest the creation of the Inter-Colonial Council have been frustrated, I don't care very much about its control of the South African Constabulary. No doubt that body is an excellent force, and it is a pity to disturb it. It is also both more economical and more efficient than two separate forces would be. But, after all, apart from the political question, the amalgamation of the Military Police Forces of the two Colonies is of nothing like the same practical importance as the amalgamation of their railways, and as some sacrifice may have to be made to popular clamour, I should not hesitate to sacrifice the South African Constabulary rather than the Central South African Railways. . . .

It had been Milner's intention to recuperate in Egypt and on the Continent before returning to England. But on the voyage he received letters from Sir Clinton and Lady Dawkins which put an end to his plans for rest and holiday. For Sir Clinton, overtaxed by his work in the City and on the War Commission, had suffered a sudden breakdown. He was warned that only complete rest for a long time could save his life. "It has been borne in upon me lately," he wrote, "that life may be very short, and that there is not too much of it to spend together." Lady Dawkins joined with him in begging Milner to come and cheer him in his exile at the Italian lakes. Milner, as a thousand instances proved, never failed to respond to the demands of friendship. He had a singular gift of inspiring lasting affection and loyal devotion in many friends, both men and women. Such affection is almost always inspired by those who are themselves of a deeply affectionate and sympathetic nature. Certainly it was so with Milner. In the present case the call of friendship was so vital and urgent that he abandoned all plans for the present and future, and landing at Marseilles devoted himself to the service of his friend until his death.

When Milner returned to England in July, the political situation was assuming a sinister aspect. The anti-Chinese agitation was being revived, even by the leaders of moderate Liberals, Grey, Asquith, and Rosebery. In December Balfour resigned office. In



THE STAIN OF CENSURE

(History to Lord Milner): "Leave your shield in my keeping. I shall make it bright again."—"*Punch*," *March* 28, 1906.)

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the following January the Liberal party gained a sweeping victory at the polls, largely owing to the shameless mendacity of a campaign against "Slavery under the British Flag."

The new Government made haste to disclaim the charge of "slavery," which their official propaganda had so sedulously disseminated. Mr. Winston Churchill, Under-Secretary for the Colonies in the new House, passed off the lie as a "terminological inexactitude." Lord Elgin, the new Colonial Secretary, regretted that the term "slavery" had been used; and the Government presently agreed to the renewal of the Chinese Labour Ordinance until 1910.[1]

But the extremists, the men who had justified Kruger from start to finish, who had denounced the war and encouraged the rebels, and echoed every libel upon British troops and British colonists, these men, embittered by prolonged opposition and intoxicated by success long deferred, were determined to triumph and tripudiate over the bodies of their fallen foes. They turned like a pack of hungry wolves upon the statesmen who had defied their menaces. They insulted Chamberlain and Balfour. They tried to destroy Milner.

It happened that shortly before Milner's departure, Mr. Evans, the Superintendent of Foreign Labour, had sanctioned the summary infliction of light corporal punishment, without reference to a Magistrate, in cases of violence or unruliness in the mines. The punishment to be thus administered was not flogging, but the equivalent of the caning of a schoolboy. Mr. Evans was an Imperial Officer of great experience, who had been appointed by the Transvaal Government to protect the interests of the Chinese coolies. This duty he had discharged zealously and efficiently. Milner raised no objection, when he informed him of his action.[2] "At the time," he wrote to Lord Selborne (23/10/05), "it seemed to me so harmless, that I really gave very little thought to the matter" (Milner Papers, XLII, iii, 179). There were, however, some cases of ill-treatment of the coolies under this regulation. On hearing of them, Sir Arthur Lawley promptly cancelled it (June). Lyttelton, after investigation, registered his disapproval of corporal punishment, however slight, having been authorized without the safeguards of the law, and without his having been consulted (Oct. 24, 1905). Upon this, a question was asked in the House

[1] See Ch. XIII, p. 484, note.

[2] Cd. 2786. Lord Milner's Speech in House of Lords, Feb. 27, 1906.

of Lords, to which Milner replied in the sense given above (Feb. 27, 1906). Characteristically taking upon himself the whole responsibility, he admitted that, in the light of subsequent abuses, he had been wrong in not interfering, "whatever might have been the drawbacks arising from there being no power promptly to repress certain abuses."

This reply was seized upon in the House of Commons. On March 21, an ardent Radical, Mr. (Sir) William Byles, moved a formal vote of censure upon Lord Milner for having authorized "the flogging of Chinese labourers in breach of the law, in violation of treaty obligations,[1] and without the knowledge or sanction of H.M. Secretary of State." The Government could not formally support so extravagant a motion. But through the mouth of Mr. Churchill, it moved an amendment which amounted to a disguised vote of censure.

The House was invited to record "its condemnation of the flogging of Chinese coolies in breach of the law," but to "refrain from passing censure upon individuals." Mr. Churchill, who had formerly beslavered Milner with adulation, by which he was not moved, and bespattered him with advice to make a hasty peace, to which he had not attended, had now an opportunity of celebrating the success attending his desertion from the Unionist party. In moving the official amendment, he extended to Milner what Balfour described as "insulting protection," speaking of the ex-High Commissioner with a patronizing insolence which aroused universal disgust. The disguised vote of censure was indignantly denounced by Balfour, Chamberlain, and others. It was carried by 355 to 135 votes. Eight days later the House of Lords, on Lord Halifax's motion, recorded "its high appreciation of the services rendered by Lord Milner to South Africa and the Empire."

The mean and pitiful exhibition of party spite registered in the resolution of the House of Commons disgraced its authors and the House, not Lord Milner. A goodly company of distinguished men, Liberals as well as Unionists, wrote to express the immeasurable disgust and humiliation with which the motion and its authors filled them. An avalanche of letters and cables from Great Britain and South Africa poured in upon Milner, conveying not so much

[1] Mr. Worsfold has pointed out that, according to Articles VI and IX of the Convention (Cd. 2026), Mr. Evans was acting as the Representative of China for the purposes of the Labour Ordinance ("Reconstruction of the New Colonies," II, p. 366).

condolence with him as indignation with his assailants. On Empire Day Chamberlain and Curzon, at a banquet attended by a remarkable gathering of eminent persons, paid eloquent tribute to Milner's services.[1]

Extract from Letter. Mr. Lyttelton to Lord Milner.

27/2/06. . . . In the world of shadows I was called your political chief. But in the world of realities you must know that I always thought of you as mine, and that I shall always think of you as a leader. And so I heard with intense pleasure the stately and convincing argument of yesterday, and felt that the truth has already, and will still more potently prevail. . . .

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Lord Roberts.

23/3/06. . . . *I do not care one atom about myself.* The Radical attack has done me no harm, except to bring me a perfect avalanche of letters and telegrams of enthusiastic sympathy, and offers of every sort and kind of thing, by which I am hopelessly embarrassed. *But* the action of the Government and House of Commons must do harm in South Africa, and the Lords can do something to minimize it. This post has brought me the most extraordinary South African correspondence you ever saw. Two things stand out pre-eminent, (1) the awful effect, discouragement everywhere, positive alarm among the scattered British of the Orange River Colony, produced by the King's Speech ; (2) the encouragement derived from the House of Lords debate.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Lord Selborne.

23/10/05. . . . I am perfectly convinced that Chinese Labour is on the whole a success . . . and that, all regrettable incidents notwithstanding, the step was a wise one, and I am proud of having advocated it. . . .

An even more striking manifestation of the admiration felt by the general public for Milner's work is enshrined in thirty-one volumes preserved among the Milner Papers. They contain the signatures of over 370,000 men of all classes to an Address, which placed on record their high appreciation of the services rendered

[1] Chamberlain's speech, and also Milner's speeches in the House of Lords, Feb. 26, condemning the intention of the Government, announced in the King's Speech (Feb. 19), to grant responsible government to the two new Colonies at an early date, and July 31, on the new Constitution, were published as pamphlets by the Imperial South African Association, Westminster.

by him to South Africa and the Empire. This testimonial was organized by Sir Bartle Frere, the son of one who, in Milner's phrase, is "honoured in the annals of South Africa and the Empire," and who, also, "was exposed to much undeserved, though transient, obloquy." Two similar addresses came from South Africa, the one from Natal bearing 3,000 signatures, the other 25,000 from the Cape Colony.

Last, but perhaps not least, the University of Cambridge repeated its offer to confer upon Milner, as one who had deserved well of his country, the Honorary Degree of LL.D. Oxford conferred upon him the degree of Honorary D.C.L. in the following year. And from Cambridge came another "testimonial" of a different sort. The original of the striking cartoon by Mr. Linley Sambourne, which had appeared in *Punch*, and is here reproduced (p. 558), was presented to Milner by some admirers, most of them unknown to him. "They hope," wrote Dr. Walter Headlam on their behalf, "that even if it recalls a painful incident, you will accept it as a token of their deep sympathy with all it represents."

Milner adhered to his determination to retire from public life. He did his utmost by argument and criticism to safeguard the position of British settlers whilst the new Constitution was being debated in Parliament. Pecuniarily, his long and strenuous service in South Africa had left him a poorer man. But whilst supplementing his small income by work in the City, he was content to find peace and recreation in restoring the remains and re-creating the garden of a small sixteenth-century manor house near Canterbury,[1] part of which, of an earlier date, had been the retirement of the last abbot of Canterbury.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Mrs. Chapin.

28/4/06. [PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL] . . . I am proud of the fact that any services I may have rendered, or tried to render, in South Africa, have resulted in leaving me a poorer man than I was when I went there, and I should like to feel that, as far as South Africa is concerned, the balance will always remain on that side. In view of the particular kind of calumny by which the British cause in that country is always assailed, this seems to me of great importance. . . .

[1] The home he thus made for himself (Sturry Court) was given to King's School, Canterbury, as a memorial to her husband by Lady Milner.

Extract from Letter. Lord Milner to Miss Bertha Synge.

13/9/06. . . . Yes, I did finally buy that little tumbledown old manor house " Sturry Court," as it is grandly called, though it is about as much like a " Court " as this bungalow is like a castle. Natheless I think that with the expenditure of a little money . . . and more care, it can be made a comfortable home, not without a certain quiet dignity (for those who have eyes to notice such things), and certainly it will hold all my books, papers, TESTIMONIALS !, and dear old rubbish generally. . . .

Such was Milner's reward. On the one hand, the triumphant war-whoops of his political enemies ; on the other, an unparalleled tribute of gratitude and admiration from countless thousands for " one who never turned his back, but marched breast forward " to the goal he had set before him—the creation of a great, prosperous and united South Africa, with equal rights for all civilized men, and forming one of that group of States described in his last classic speech at Johannesburg, " all independent in their own local concerns, but all united for the defence of their own common interests, and the development of a common civilization " ; united in a permanent organic union, the British Empire.

The nobility of Milner's character, the grandeur and selflessness of his ideals, the splendour of his work for South Africa and the Empire, frustrated though it has been to some extent, and where frustrated, proving the accuracy of his prophecies, these volumes have made plain for all who have eyes to see.

Lesser men feign greater goals,
Failing whereof they may sit
Scholarly to judge the souls
That go down into the Pit,
And, despite its certain clay,
Heave a new world toward the day.

These at labour make no sign,
More than planets, tides or years
Which discover God's design,
Not our hopes and not our fears ;
Nor in aught they gain or lose
Seek a triumph or excuse.[1]

[1] From Rudyard Kipling's *The Pro-Consuls.*

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